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THE SPHERE

LONDON, December 24, 1960

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CAROLS FOR THE QUEEN

Choristers of the Royal Parish Church of St. Mary Magdalene, Sandringham, walk in procession during a practice for the Christmastide services. They will sing before the Queen and other members of the Royal Family, who will be spending the holiday at Sandringham House. Her Majesty and the Duke of Edinburgh were to travel with their children to Sandringham on Thursday, and were to be joined by the Queen Mother, Princess Margaret and Mr. Armstrong-Jones, the Duchess of Kent, Princess Alexandra and Prince Michael. On Christmas eve, the Royal house party will be completed by the arrival of the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester, who will be accompanied by their two sons. On Christmas Day, the Queen's message to Britain and the Commonwealth will be first broadcast in this country at 1 p.m. December 25 is also the birthday of both the Duchess of Gloucester and Princess Alexandra. Sandringham Church, which adjoins the grounds of the House, contains numerous Royal memorials, the most prominent being the silver altar which was presented forty-nine years ago in memory of King Edward VII

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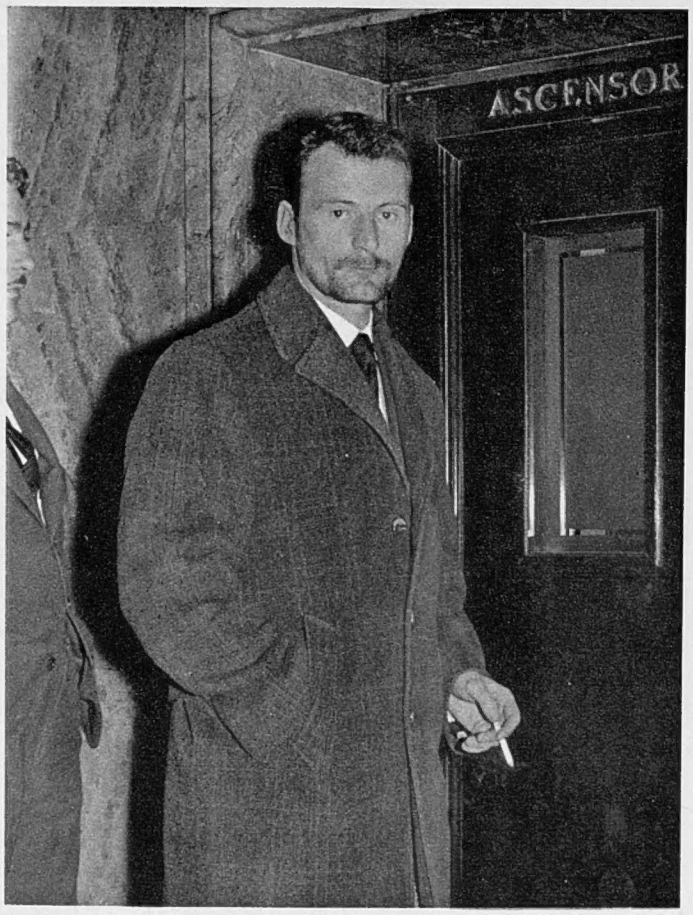
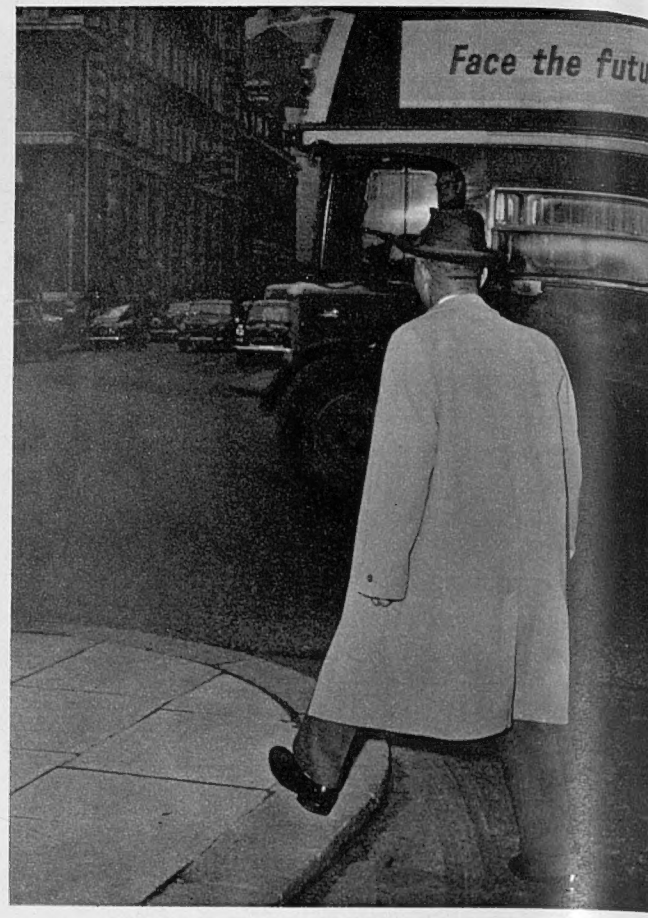
M. Lagaillarde, the Algerian Settlers' champion, was in the capital of Spain last week. He had fled from France, where he was standing trial for alleged complicity in the uprising in Algiers at the beginning of this year. In Madrid he met General Salan, another leader in the Settlers' cause and the former Commander-in-Chief in Algeria



M. LAGAILLARDE IN MADRID

Far right: Dr. Banda, the Nyasaland African Nationalist leader, started a boycott last week of the Rhodesian Federal Review Conference. He was joined by the other two chief African nationalists, Mr. Kaunda and Mr. Nkomo. It was stated in the issue of *The Sphere* dated December 17 that Dr. Banda had decided to return to the conference at the beginning of last week. In fact, he did so, but left after a couple of hours. The boycott by the three leaders meant the postponement of the two territorial conferences on the constitutions of Northern and Southern Rhodesia. It was decided last week that the conference on Southern Rhodesia would start without Mr. Nkomo

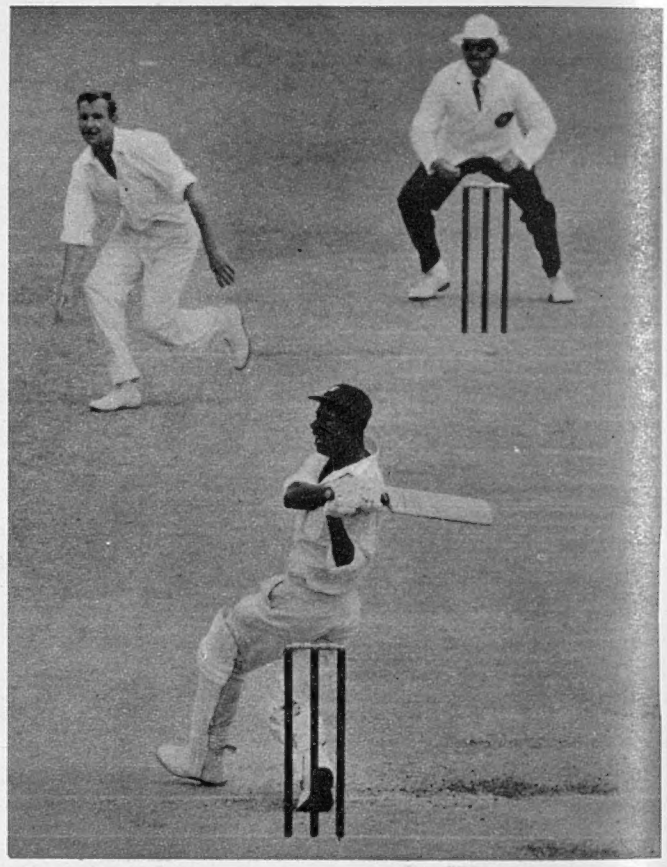


A THOUGHT FOR DR. BANDA

Congo's first Foreign Minister, under Mr. Lumumba, Mr. Bomboko, became a supporter of President Kasavubu and Colonel Mobutu and took the post of Chairman of the College of High Commissioners. Another member of Mr. Lumumba's former Government, Mr. Gizenga, last week claimed he was the Congo's only legitimate ruler and proclaimed the rebel city of Stanleyville as his capital. In the U.N. last week, there were acrid debates on the chaos in Congo

MR. BOMBOKO GIVES A PRESS CONFERENCE

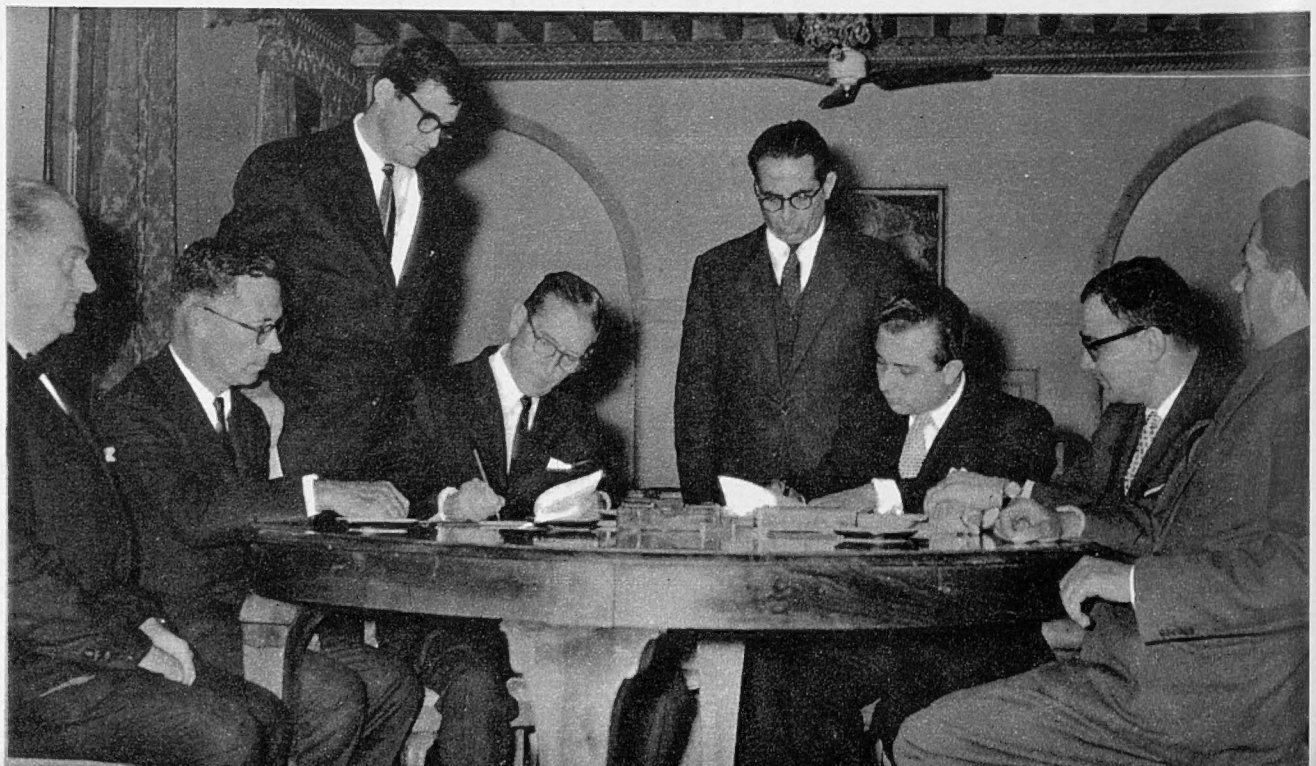
Far right: Wesley Hall pulls a ball from Ian Meckiff for four runs during the first Test match of the series between Australia and the West Indies at Brisbane. The match, described by Sir Donald Bradman as "the greatest Test match of all time," ended in a tie—the first in Test history. Both sides had total scores of 737 runs. The second match of the series begins on December 30 at Melbourne



Right: THE HISTORIC TEST MATCH TIE

U.S. AID FOR CYPRUS

In the Presidential Palace at Nicosia, Cyprus, Mr. Fraser Wilkins, the United States Ambassador, and Mr. Spyros Kyprianou, the Cyprus Foreign Minister, sign an agreement for the U.S. to make grants of economic aid to Cyprus. The first grant, which will be in the form of 50,000 tons of grain, is due to arrive on the island early in the New Year. For the past three years there has been an acute shortage of grain in Cyprus, because of prolonged periods of drought. To assist in solving the island's economic difficulties, Britain announced during the signing of the Cyprus Agreement earlier this year that she would pay £12,000,000 over the five years to March 1965



THE NEWS IN PICTURES

Ethiopia was added to the world's trouble spots in the middle of last week. While the Emperor, Haile Selassie, was on a State visit to Brazil, broadcasts from Addis Ababa, the Ethiopian capital, indicated that there had been an uprising against his regime. Some reports stated that the Crown Prince, Asfa Wassen, had seized power and been proclaimed Negus, or King. Among his supporters were said to be Ras Imru, who had been appointed Prime Minister, and General Mulugeta Bullie, nominated as new Army chief. There was stated to be fighting in the streets of Addis Ababa. However, a communiqué from the Ethiopian Embassy in London declared that the Crown Prince was being forced to act "under pressure," and that the Ethiopian Army (which numbers about 28,000) and the country at large were remaining loyal to the Emperor. Meanwhile, Haile Selassie was flying back to Africa from Brazil. After stopping in Monrovia, in Liberia, he flew on for an unknown destination. Areas in Ethiopia known to be hostile to Haile Selassie are Eritrea, where the population is Muslim, and the Ogaden, where the bulk of the inhabitants look for support from the new independent State of Somalia

THE EMPEROR HAILE SELASSIE OF ETHIOPIA

CROWN PRINCE ASFA WASSEN

The Himalayan kingdom of Nepal was also the scene of political drama last week when King Mahendra dismissed the country's first elected Government under the Prime Ministership of Mr. Koirala, the Nepali Congress leader, and dissolved both Houses of Parliament. Mr. Koirala and some of his Cabinet colleagues were said to have been arrested. In a proclamation, King Mahendra declared that hopes of an elected government bringing progress and stability to the country had foundered. Instead, corruption and lawlessness were prevailing

KING MAHENDRA OF NEPAL

MR. KOIRALA, DISMISSED FROM OFFICE

F.L.N. SPOKESMAN

Ferhat Abbas (centre), leader of the Algerian Nationalists and Prime Minister in their provisional Government for Algeria, speaks at a Press conference in Tunis. He is flanked by M. Boussoff (left), his Minister of Communications, and M. Malek, Minister of Information. Ferhat Abbas declared he did not believe President de Gaulle's policy could bring a peaceful solution to the Algerian problem and said he had asked for immediate United Nations intervention to stop the bloodshed. Total casualties in the riots in Algeria during President de Gaulle's visit were put last week at 123 killed and nearly 500 wounded. In France the Right-Wing was preparing to campaign against de Gaulle in the referendum

THE NEWS IN PICTURES

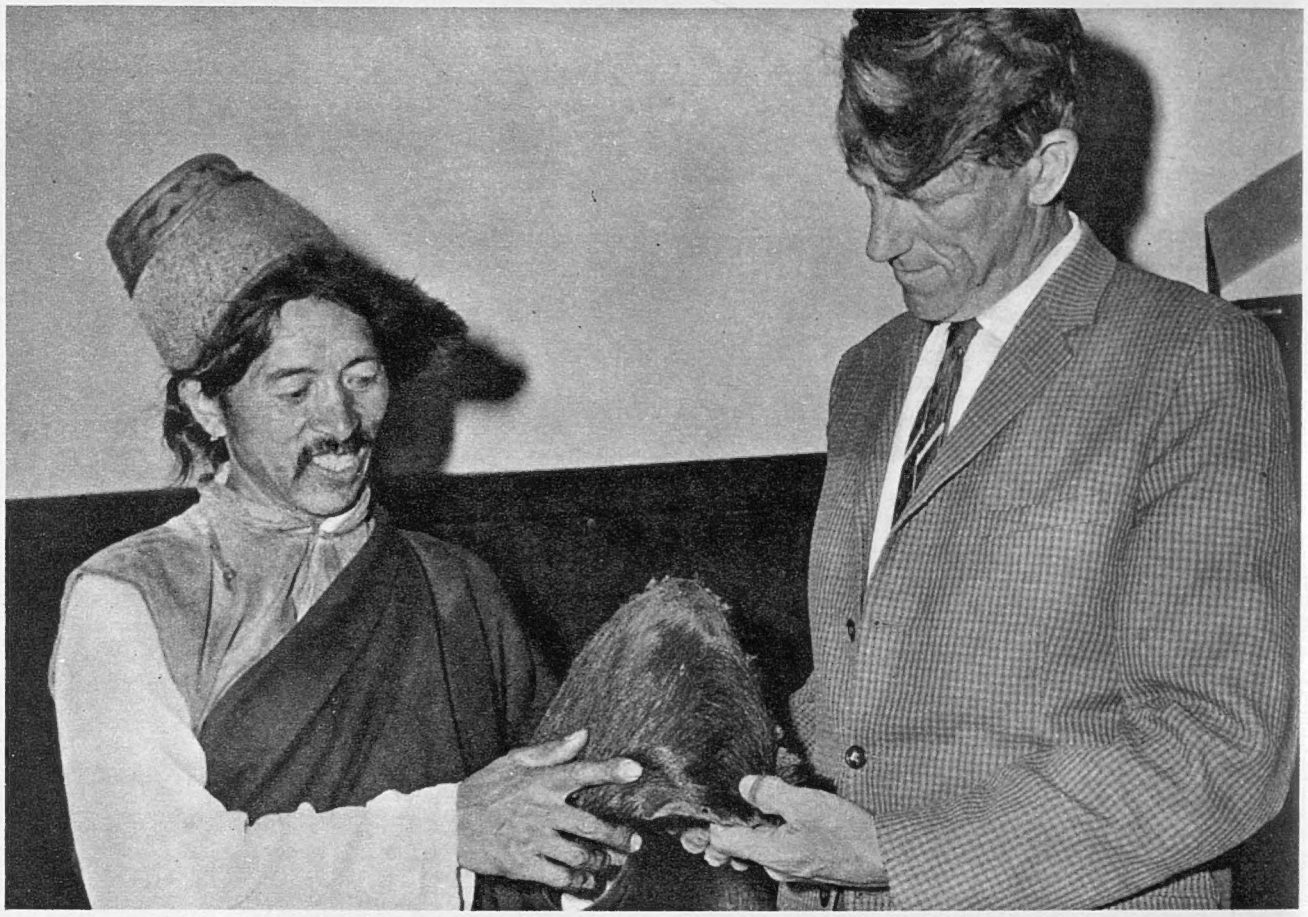
Sergeant Hale (right), of the United States Army's 101st Airborne Division, is handed his discharge papers in mid-air above Fort Campbell in Kentucky. He was discharged at a height of 9,000 ft. On reaching the ground Sergeant Hale, who comes from the Pearl River district of New York, immediately signed on for another three years in the U.S. forces

DISCHARGED IN MID-AIR

Above right: Broadway in New York merits its name of the Great White Way as it lies under a blanket of snow. Last week parts of the city were under 17 ins. of snow as a result of the first storm of the season in the Eastern United States. Transport and communications were obstructed and business at the United Nations Headquarters in New York was affected

NEW YORK AFTER A BLIZZARD

On his return from the Himalaya, Sir Edmund Hillary examines in Calcutta the scalp believed to be that of a yeti or "Abominable Snowman." With him is Khumjo Chumbi, the Elder, or Chief, of the village of Khumjung, in Nepal, in which the scalp had been found. The villagers refused to allow it to leave them unless Khumjo Chumbi travelled with Sir Edmund. On leaving Calcutta, Sir Edmund was to fly to Chicago, where the scalp was to be examined by experts. From there he was to go on to London and Paris, for further expert examinations. According to legend in Nepal, the Himalaya was once populated by Yetis and Sherpas, who lived happily until the Yetis took to man-eating and became abominable



SIR EDMUND HILLARY, A SHERPA ELDER AND THE YETI SCALP IN CALCUTTA

NOBEL PRIZE WINNERS FOR 1960

From the left are: Professor Willard F. Libby, of California University (winner of the Nobel Prize for Chemistry); Dr. Peter Medawar, of London University, and Sir Frank Macfarlane Burnet, of Melbourne University (joint winners of the Prize for Medicine); Professor Donald A. Glaser, California University (winner of the Physics Prize), and M. St. John Perse, the French poet (Literature). They had just been presented with their awards—each worth this year about £15,500—by King Gustaf Adolf of Sweden in a ceremony in the Concert Hall of the Royal Palace in Stockholm. Later the prize winners were the guests of honour in the traditional Nobel banquet held in the Swedish capital's City Hall

Belgium's Royal Wedding

BANQUET FOR THE GUESTS

Princess Paola, King Baudouin's sister-in-law, precedes Princess Margaret and Mr. Antony Armstrong-Jones. Representing the Queen at the wedding, Princess Margaret is wearing the Sash of the Order of Leopold, and her husband the Grand Cross of the Order of Leopold II, presented to them shortly after their arrival in Brussels

Right:
The Dowager Queen Elizabeth, King Baudouin's grandmother, is escorted by King Olav of Norway

King Baudouin and Dona Fabiola arrive for the banquet and ball held in their honour in the white-and-gilt Throne Room of the Royal Palace in Brussels. She is wearing the diamond-studded coronet given as Spain's wedding present. Over 1,500 guests attended the glittering function two days before the marriage of King Baudouin and Dona Fabiola. Among the King's party were his father, his step-mother, Princess Liliane, Prince Albert, and Dona Fabiola's mother, the Countess of Mora and Aragon

Left: Ex-Queen Anne of Rumania (left) and Princess Liliane, ex-King Leopold's wife, precede ex-King Michael of Rumania and ex-King Simeon of Bulgaria. **Centre:** The Grand Duchess Charlotte of Luxembourg is escorted by ex-King Leopold. **Right:** General Franco's daughter is accompanied by her husband, the Marquis de Villaverde

BELGIUM'S ROYAL WEDDING

King Baudouin of the Belgians last week became the husband of Dona Fabiola de Mora y Aragon, a descendant of the old rulers of Aragon and Navarre, in a civil ceremony conducted by M. Cooremans, the Burgomaster of Brussels. The ceremony, a legal preliminary to any church wedding in Belgium, was attended by members of the Royal families of Europe and ambassadors and their consorts. But it had the same formalities as an ordinary civil wedding—both bride and groom had to produce their birth certificates. After an interval, the King and his bride left the Palace to the thunder of salutes to drive through the streets, lined with crowds, to the Collegiate Church of St. Gudule. By his own wish, King Baudouin led his bride into the church. The service began with Cardinal Siri, the Papal delegate, reading a message from the Pope, and then came the ceremony conducted by Cardinal Van Roey. In the evening, before leaving for their honeymoon in Spain, the Royal couple spoke to their people on television.

In the Throne Room of the Palace in Brussels, King Baudouin and his bride sit in front of the table for the civil ceremony

King Baudouin and Queen Fabiola stand before the altar during the wedding ceremony in the Collegiate Church of St. Gudule. **Left:** The Roman Catholic ceremony takes place amid Gothic splendour

Right: In St. Gudule, King Baudouin and his bride pass under an archway of raised swords after the ceremony

JOHN CONNELL

SENATOR KENNEDY ON STRATEGY

It is, I suspect, a completely impregnable proposition that every intelligent person, on either side of the Iron Curtain, is bound to take an intense interest in the views on foreign policy, and on global strategy, held by the President-elect of the United States, Senator John F. Kennedy. Those views, after all, can impinge with dramatic suddenness and finality on the lives of every one of us. It happens that he has expounded his strategic thinking with exemplary thoroughness and clarity, not in a whistle-stop oration in some township in the remote Middle West, but in an article in a widely-read and influential publication, the (American) *Saturday Review*.

The history of this article is itself not without interest. Exactly six months ago there was published in the United Kingdom a remarkable little book, called *Deterrent or Defence*, by Captain B. H. Liddell Hart. I must admit candidly to possessing the privilege of Liddell Hart's friendship; and I would add that my admiration for, and debt to, him are both practically limitless. He is an extraordinary man who, over close on forty years, has influenced politico-military thinking to an incalculable degree; he has persuaded, taught, argued, prophesied and warned incessantly; his ideas have been derided by pudding-headed politicians and ambitious yet amateurish soldiers, and he has never received the slightest official recognition or reward.

His latest book summed up, lucidly and cogently, all his thinking on the immense political and strategic problems presented by the development, on either side of the Iron Curtain, of thermo-nuclear weapons whose destructive capacity is enormous, and whose method of delivery is world wide and well-nigh instantaneous. It seemed to me that Liddell Hart, by the clarity and cogency of his writing, took the defence dilemma of the West out of the fog of bewilderment with which, in the minds of those of us who are unaccustomed to the semantic mumbo-jumbo of most modern military writing, it is customarily surrounded, and deprived it of the irrational and perilous element of panic.

Now many people in this country (most of whom ought to know better) profess to be in a perpetual panic about the Americans' possession and control of a large thermo-nuclear armoury; and the propaganda machinery of the U.S.S.R. ruthlessly exploits and magnifies their fears. They would all be well advised (from Canon Collins downwards to the poor, little "student" whom I saw in a C.N.D. procession the other day, bearing a placard on which was scrawled "Susan Wants to Live") to read both Liddell Hart's book and Mr. Kennedy's review of it.

For in September, when the Presidential election campaign was beginning to warm up, the book was published in the United States. Admittedly defence in its title was spelt "defense"; but this is a little idiosyncrasy in our allies which we must learn to tolerate with as much courtesy as we can muster. *The Saturday Review* invited both Senator Kennedy and Vice-President Nixon to review the book or comment on it. Vice-President Nixon explained that his current schedule prevented him from accepting the invitation. A pity. In September his views on strategy were important. Now, of course, and for the next four years at least, they are of merely academic interest—and will the courteous and faithful reader from Minnesota, a devoted Republican, who has sent me a stream of letters to persuade me that Richard Nixon is really a great guy and has won the Election, take due note of my heretical obduracy?

Mr. Dean Rusk will be U.S. Secretary of State in the Kennedy Administration

Mr. Kennedy gave it almost two closely-printed pages of careful analysis. Its grand theme, he said, came down to this: "The West must be prepared to face down Communist aggression, short of nuclear war, by conventional forces." He pointed out that Liddell Hart advocates the expansion of conventional forces under the command of NATO, an increase in the mobility of conventional forces to deal with conflicts outside Europe, and the creation of a United Nations standby force of about 20,000 men, including reserves.

"Behind this theme," said Mr. Kennedy, "is a judgment that responsible leaders in the West will not and should not deal with limited aggression by unlimited weapons whose use could only be mutually suicidal. . . . I share Captain Hart's judgment; and whatever our military theories have been since 1945 we have, in fact, dealt with limited aggression by limited means—from the Berlin airlift to the defense of Quemoy and Matsu. But I would put our problem in a somewhat different way. I believe that the central task of American and Western military policy is to make all forms of Communist aggression irrational and unattractive. From this basis of strength I believe that we must press on . . . to seek in negotiation with the Russians effective means of arms control."

This seems to me a policy statement of the highest significance. *The Guardian* (of Manchester), in a long leading article about this review published on the eve of last week's defence debate in the House of Commons, quoted this same passage, and argued—a little pussily, I thought—that it echoed and supported the "official" Labour defence policy, and could be construed as an indirect criticism of the British Government's failure to put forward proposals for a balanced NATO strategy in Europe. This seems to me to put the President-elect's broad and far-sighted arguments into a curiously parochial perspective. But it all depends, of course, on what you mean by "balanced"; Mr. Kennedy certainly did not suggest, though Liddell Hart did with great urgency, that the European nations (including ourselves) should abandon atomic weapons and leave to the U.S.A. the task of deterring Russian atomic strength. What he did examine in some detail was the idea—it was very novel as recently as last September, though it has become familiar since General Norstad propounded it last month to the NATO Parliamentarians—that NATO should develop its own nuclear deterrent, supplementary to that possessed by the United States, under a NATO nuclear treaty.

In addition, Mr. Kennedy made the strongest possible case for the Americans' maintenance, in the present state of world affairs, of the security and effectiveness of their own nuclear deterrent. This is an aspect of global strategy whose importance, Mr. Kennedy indicated, America's allies in Europe tend to underestimate. The overwhelming significance which Americans attach to it has deep historical and psychological roots. The President-elect is obviously determined to see that his country's deterrent is both "safe from sudden attack and capable of effective penetration of Soviet defenses."

"We have no right," he pointed out, "to tempt Soviet planners and political leaders with the possibility of catching our aircraft and unprotected missiles on the ground, in a gigantic Pearl Harbour. This is our first defense problem." We all have our King Charles's head. Pearl Harbour has for Mr. Kennedy and his generation in the United States the obsessive significance which Gallipoli, the Somme and Passchendaele have, in this country, for mine and its immediate predecessor. The prevention of another Pearl Harbour takes a prime place in all his strategic thinking.

He therefore attaches peculiar importance to the development of what he calls "the new generation of mobile missiles," such as Polaris and Minuteman. Since the Kremlin has lately thought fit to utter an especially portentous warning to Britain about permitting the use of Holy Loch as a base for Polaris submarines, and has cited some glib analogies from World War II, it might be as well to lay stress on Mr. Kennedy's opinion of the constructive value of these formidable weapons. Their relative security from attack, he said, "should diminish the need for hair-trigger decisions, and should give the United States, and the world as a whole, a greater degree of stability." By contrast it is worth noting that the Communists in their much-trumpeted Moscow Manifesto, while denying the inevitability of total nuclear war, and asserting the principle of co-existence, made it clear that they had no intention of letting up on all forms of indirect aggression against the West.

I have striven to engrave on my memory certain sentences from Liddell Hart's book, which seem to me to hold the pith of all his philosophy, and to be the moral answer to Communist strategy and tactics alike.

"It would be wiser for Western statesmen, and all of us, to become adjusted to a continuation of difficulties, and tense manœuvring, than to look for any definite settlement. Such settlements are uncommon in history, but situations change. . . . History should have taught us that no antagonistic line-up is fixed and final. A relaxation of tension, even though it may seem no more than temporary, offers the best chance of a changing situation—which can spell salvation from any current menace."

Mr. Kennedy quoted, with a similar approval and sympathy, a closely-related passage from the same book: "Keep strong, if possible. In any case, keep cool. Have unlimited patience. Never corner an opponent, and always assist him to save his face. Put yourself in his shoes, so as to see things through his eyes. Avoid self-righteousness like the devil—nothing is so self-blinding."

Homely common sense? Yes, but if the new President of the United States is guided, in his conduct of his country's strategy, by principles such as these, there is more than a gleam of hope on the horizon.

PRAYER AND PARADE

Mr. Alexander Abramov (right), the Soviet Ambassador in Laos, crouches for Buddhist prayers at Vientiane Airport during the inauguration of the Russian airlift to Laos (Below) Artillery of General Phoumi Nosavan's right-wing forces are seen in a static parade at Savannakhet, in Southern Laos before their attack on Vientiane

The Russian airlift to Laos was ostensibly begun to take in petrol and food. But as the battle for Vientiane, the administrative capital, was intensified early last week, it was reported that Russian arms, artillery and ammunition were being flown in to aid Mr. Quinim Pholsena, the acting Prime Minister, in his struggle against the right-wing forces of General Phoumi Nosavan. Mr. Pholsena had taken over the Government after the flight of Prince Souvanna Phouma to Cambodia a few days previously. General Nosavan's army, said to be equipped with American arms, was advancing on the city from the south, while to the north there were considerable units of the Communist Pathet Lao guerrillas. The military picture was further confused by the return to Vientiane of paratroops under Captain Kong Lae, who had been preparing to attack the Royal capital of Luang Prabang.

There were two hopeful signs in the otherwise sombre situation. One was that Mr. Pholsena was understood to have asked the British Ambassador, Mr. John Addis, and the United Nations representative, Mr. Zellweger, to mediate in the dispute. It was not known whether General Nosavan would accept this mediation. The other was that, according to Mr. Pholsena, Prince Souvanna had not, in fact, resigned the Premiership and might return. It was believed that the Prince's policy, which had so far failed, of attempting to bring the various conflicting sides together in Laos still appealed to many people in the country.

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A London Newsletter

13-15, JOHN ADAM STREET, W.C.2

The Queen Mother, Princess Margaret and Mr. Armstrong-Jones talk to Dame Margot Fonteyn and young dancers after a gala matinée of ballet presented by the Royal Academy of Dancing at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane

CHRISTMAS COMES. . . . The season of "peace and goodwill" returns again after a year which opened hopefully enough and soon turned to dust and ashes and frustration. We were certainly encouraged to expect that 1960 would be a turning-point in history, bringing an important forward advance to better relations in international affairs. We kept our eyes on the Summit and still glowed with the Government's assurance that, having never had it so good, we could soon look to have it better still. But we failed to reckon with Mr. K.'s liver, with the inevitable results from over-confidence in good times, with the periodic and no less inevitable economic slumps which follow trade booms, with reckless strikes which paralysed our docks and lost us overseas customers, with the reimposition of new brakes and curbs on spending which quickly turned one of our vital industries from boom to slump conditions, with a resumption in the rise of the cost of living, with the disintegration of any effective opposition to a Government which had clearly proved wildly optimistic, with the Congo and Central Africa and with the weather. The weather and the floods of the latter half of 1960 were headline news. Let us be fair to 1960. It *is* true that in December 1959 I measured 9·77 ins. of rain and only once before in thirty years (Nov. 1951) had I measured so much in a month. But the tell-tale figures of rainfall since July 1, 1960, tell their dreadful story, a year's average fall in five-and-a-half months, with the certainty of well over 50 ins. for the year (against an average of 32 ins.) in my own comparatively favoured county. (Note the extraordinary prevalence of *thunder* showers throughout the year, resulting in one village enduring twice the rainfall of a village five miles away.) Our ancestors were more prone to superstition than our enlightened generation. They saw, all over Europe, in the Lisbon Earthquake of November 1755 the wrath of God turned on the children of disobedience, and their reaction led to a remarkable, if theoretical, change of heart. To-day we have given up asking whether man's disobedience can lead to reprisals from Heaven. We do not ask for, and are not furnished with, a scientific explanation of the scourges which fall upon us. But the fault, dear Brutus, lies not in our stars; it may be that the hopes of a Happy Christmas and a bright New Year rest with ourselves—a change of heart in humanity in faith and not in fear. Anyway, why should the victims of our own flooded rivers stand as scapegoats for the nation's sins?

SQUEALING TOO SOON. Between 1953 and 1959 the rate of expansion in the motor industry was phenomenal. Wages were very high and thousands of workers left other industries to share in the good times. Mr. Maudling was justified in saying that in this industry, perhaps more than in others, demand is unplannable. He was also justified in pointing out that skilled and semi-skilled workers in it, on three- or four-day working weeks, can still earn wages which compare very well with the general rates of people working full time in other industries, and that it is not unreasonable in industries always liable to booms and setbacks to expect (and even prepare for) some reduction in earnings on the inevitable downward swing. He might perhaps have admitted that in 1959 his Government was possibly a little too encouraging in its prophecies of still better times for this admired and flattered vital industry and perhaps a little late in insisting on caution in the H.P. stampede and spending spree. All the same, it was a commonsense principle inculcated in my youth and even middle age that every man should use his head and lay up for a rainy day, a sound principle which the Welfare State and election promises have done much to kill untimely. In our worship of the golden calf, we have made headlines (until only the other day) of the wealth and luxury of the great motor-car cities, and those of us in less fluctuating and less profitable trades may be excused if we feel that the employees are squealing rather too soon. After all, a skilled worker earning for several years £30 a week or more could quite easily, if he were prudent, have laid a little by while still keeping the wolf a comfortable distance from his door, and could have laid a good deal bigger nest-egg, if he had had the sense to avoid wildcat strikes for still more pay or shorter hours when the going was so very good for him.

THE EGG OR THE CHICKEN? It did not take long (two days?) before the vicious spiral of wage claims, following the Police pay increases, began to whirl. The teachers were first in the field with an "unarguable case." It is based on wage comparability, once known as the parable of the labourers in the vineyard and in that parable the problem was admirably settled. Everyone, whatever his claim to longer hours or more important work, was awarded a penny. It was the settled rate for the job with no question of double—*or quit*. The structure is more complicated to-day, and every rise in one job, usually agreed on this basis of wage comparability, is certain to evoke compelling arguments from half a dozen others for a comparable increase. It is not easy to seed in importance the jobs which have to be done in a modern state. These jobs are very interdependent. It might be possible to argue, I suppose, that if the teachers had some years ago been raised to "the £1,000-a-year" level, they would have so well grounded the rising generations in virtue and morality that there would to-day be no need to bribe policemen to detect or prevent crime. On the principle, which Mr. Butler upholds, that prevention is better than cure and cure better than retribution, the teachers' case is a good one. Certainly the policemen's lot has not of late been a happy one, but it is perhaps too late now to puzzle over which came first, the egg or the chicken. The spiral golden staircase rises higher and higher to the sky, and only the sky 's the limit.

IN THE GLASSHOUSE. Government portfolios, I suppose, vary in the comfort they afford to their holders. Few of them can expect to carry general approval. The Foreign Office, the Treasury and the Home Office are certainly in that category. The Ministry of Transport, perhaps, is in a unique and isolated

A PRACTICAL SUGGESTION FOR A LAST-MINUTE CHRISTMAS PRESENT

The Christmas season is now with us. For those who are thinking of a gift which will have a lasting value—to relatives, friends or business associates at home and abroad—a subscription to "The Sphere" is recommended. The weekly comprehensive pictorial coverage of world news, with its special emphasis on the Commonwealth and Industry, and its informed articles by expert writers, will appeal to the busy man or woman of affairs in the professions or industry wherever they are.

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A fireman places flowers on the statue of the Virgin in the Piazza di Spagna, in Rome

Miss Josephina de Vasconcellos works on part of the Christmas crib scene for Trafalgar Square

People throng the Piazza di Spagna, in Rome, on December 8, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. Pope John XXIII celebrated the annual Mass at the foot of the column dedicated to the Virgin Mary. The column was erected in 1857

category. No Minister in that department has ever yet pleased anybody. One and all have battled with ever-increasing road deaths and traffic congestion and complaints about rail services. Some have been charged with favouring one and neglecting the other, and none so far has been able to show acceptable progress in improving either form of communication. Therefore, it behoves all Ministers who have held that portfolio to refrain from throwing stones either at his predecessors or successors, unless he is prepared to receive a pretty heavy brick in his own eye. Lord Morrison of Lambeth, now installed in another place and a comfortable one, is only too ready to point out the sins of omission of Ministers past and present and to compare their achievements with his own, and in consequence is offered the means to weigh the motes in their eyes against the beam hurled at his own. Life peerages, it seems, offer great opportunities (which are freely taken) for their holders to point out how things ought to be done and how much better done they were *Consule Planco*. Life peerages also afford a certain amount of free time which can be profitably spent in journalistic, broadcast and literary reminiscence of a political and critical and biographical kind. That perhaps was their *raison d'être*, but even life peerages carry their occupational and recreational risks.

ANOTHER PLAN FOR OXFORD TRAFFIC. The tragi-comedy of the Oxford traffic problem still plays to crowded houses. The latest plan to throw realistic light on the dark problem is that of the Oxford Preservation Trust, and its planning adviser, Sir W. Holford, President of the R.I.B.A., strongly supports its merits. A variant of the Abercrombie scheme (favoured by the University), it has three great advantages. It spares the Christ Church meadows, it leaves St. Ebbes clear of major traffic and keeps the hum of traffic farther away from the city centre. It envisages a four-lane road bridge somewhere across the Thames with several double-carriage freeway roads. Unfortunately it would cost twice as much as the city's £3,500,000 scheme. As for the Sandys scheme, he described it (as a number of other interests have done) as disastrous from every point of view of amenity and preservation. Already the Oxford Preservation Trust's bright idea has been attacked by Mr. Chandler, not on the score of expense but on the score that the Trust, while at last embracing the precinct idea, does little to implement it. I had supposed that in the last few years the time limit for new plans and proposals had been passed, and that one day in our time a decision would be announced as final and definitive and, of course, execrated by a vast minority or even majority. But, it seems, the time for tendering is still open. I suppose it would cost more than £7,000,000 to call on those Americans who understand transplanting old buildings to move the college " precincts " and the bookshops and essential cafés to a site on the bleak and comparatively isolated Berkshire Downs. It would be healthier there and quieter, and would less distract students from the prime duty of acquiring knowledge. Once that was accomplished, commercial Oxford could go to Hell in its own way.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE BILL AMENDMENTS. No one can deny that, under present legislative conditions, capital punishment, as a specialised penalty, is dying in tragi-comedy. The Minister largely responsible for the conditions still justifying the supreme penalty possesses also the awful responsibility of breaking his own rules. As things are to-day, the death penalty question, so bitterly controversial, *solvitur ambulando*. It is not yet solved, and while it remains for certain categories of murder, things are not likely to be made easier by the Opposition amendment to prohibit the death sentence in any circumstances on persons under twenty-one. Youths in their teens, as we know to our cost, are not incapable of planning and carrying out capital murders, and the effect of this amendment might be to encourage ruthless young criminals to get murder out of their systems before reaching their majority. Among other amendments, an effort to increase the minimum age of criminal responsibility to twelve years has more sense, and certainly Sir T. Moore and his backers have a good case for their clause to give courts the power to compel parents to contribute to the maintenance at approved schools and Borstals of their younger delinquent children.

THE OLD STAGER

Visiting the Royal Academy, the Queen is with Sir Charles Wheeler, President of the R.A.

At the Private View, a distinguished visitor Viscount Sam

The silver-framed mirror, c. 1670, is flanked by silver sconces. Below is a silver centre table given to Charles II by the citizens of London in 1670. The mirror and table are lent by Her Majesty the Queen. Right is Lely's portrait of Barbara Villiers, Duchess of Cleveland, as a shepherdess

A marble bust of Charles II sculpted by Honore Pellé

In celebration of the tercentenary of the Restoration, the Royal Academy's Winter Exhibition at Burlington House is designed to picture the lavish ebullience and scientific curiosity of a period remembered equally for Nell Gwynn and the foundation of the Royal Society. It is open until February 26 of next year. Charles II, as Evelyn points out in his diary, " brought in a politer way of living which passed to luxury and intolerable expense." Giving the ornately-decorated background to the period, the exhibition contains about 700 items of work produced in England between 1660 and the flight of James II in 1688. It is an age which was given its flavour by Restoration Comedy, the music of Purcell, the carving of Grinling Gibbons, the achievements of Isaac Newton, and the architecture of Wren. Much of this could not, unfortunately, be placed in an exhibition. But the formal portraits by Lely, the baroque furniture and silverware, and the clocks and scientific instruments are included in fine detail. One outstanding section is devoted to the work of Samuel Cooper, the leading miniaturist in Europe, until he died in 1672. His portraits of Court and Commonwealth sitters are full of captured personality. He was so popular that he was able to charge more even than Lely.

Charles II Enthroned, wearing coronation robes, by John Michael Wright

uses in front of one of the exhibits

The interest of the age in astronomy is exemplified in these globes, spheres and an orrery

THE AGE OF CHARLES II

The Winter Exhibition at the Royal Academy

A virginal made by Stephen Keene in London in 1668. On the inside of the lid a landscape with figures is painted in tempera. It is a typical example of the ordinary virginal built in England from 1640-75

Left: The funeral effigy of CharlesII from Westminster Abbey, with wax head and hands. The garter robes, apparently contemporary, are among the oldest preserved; the wig was renewed in 1729

THE VOICE OF THE COMMON

AUSTRALIA

Although it is 100 years since the explorer John McDouall Stuart, of Fifeshire, led ten men and seventy-one horses across its harsh expanse, the Northern Territory of Australia has remained a frontier-land—at least in comparison with the geographically-favoured country of the southern seaboard. The 520,000-square-mile region, two-and-a-half times the size of France, extends through the Australian tropics, from the South Australian border northwards to the Arafura Sea. Its population is fewer than 40,000, of whom 16,000 are Aborigines.

There have long been conflicting views on the Territory and its future role. There are some who dismiss it as a wasteland and others who see it as an untapped El Dorado. A current popular suggestion is that atomic power plants could be set up on the coast to convert sea water into fresh, thus pumping life into the interior. Water is, indeed, a problem. Apart from the northern belt, most of the Territory is arid or semi-arid. Darwin, in the north, averages about 58 ins. of rain in the wet season and only 2 ins. during the remainder of the year. Comparable figures for Alice Springs, in the south, are 8 and 2 ins.

New light has recently been thrown on the Territory's prospects for closer settlement in the 250,000-word report of a committee headed by the Professor of Agriculture at Melbourne University, Dr. H. C. Forster. The report could be the long-term guide for agricultural expansion in the Territory. The committee—appointed in July last year by the Federal Government, which administers the Territory—was asked to report on prospects for future agricultural settlement and on the major factors to be considered in shaping the Territory's agricultural policy. Its cautious recommendations, while encouraging for the fuller development of the Territory, indicate that extensive trials and investigations are still necessary.

The mainstays of the Northern Territory economy at present are the pastoral and mining industries, both of which have shown considerable expansion in the last decade. The Territory has a cattle population of 1,250,000, dispersed principally over large leasehold holdings. The largest of these, Alexandria Station, in the Barkly Tablelands, occupies 11,262 square miles, although Government policy to-day favours the allocation of relatively small runs. The cattle industry has benefited from the results of pastoral research carried out in the Territory and from a vigorous post-war programme of low-cost road construction. New developmental roads are making it possible to move increasing numbers of cattle by truck, rather than by foot along the traditional stock routes. Mining to-day overshadows the pastoral industry as an income earner. The principal minerals produced are uranium, copper and gold, with smaller quantities of manganese, wolfram and scheelite ores, mica, silver and tin. The mineral wealth of the Territory has by no means been fully explored and there are indications that its history as a minerals producer is just beginning.

Agriculture, on which hopes for future closer settlement depend, has long been the " Cinderella " industry of the Territory. Settlement schemes before World War II, left a discouraging impression of technical and economic difficulty. Since then, however, research work by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation and the Territory Administration has led to a more optimistic reassessment of the Territory's agricultural potential. Regional studies of climate, geology, hydrology, soil types and plant communities and the experimental planting of crops like rice, tobacco, peanuts, and cotton have yielded information of great interest.

The Forster Committee has confirmed the importance of this work and has urged intensified research on some fronts and the development of first-class agricultural extension services to serve future needs. The committee says that at present agriculture closely integrated with the cattle industry offers the best prospects of promoting agricultural settlement, but further investigations are needed into pastures and fodder crop production. The immediate start of a settlement scheme is not recommended. The report recommends that pilot farms be set up to determine the economics of farm scale rice production and also mentions the possibility of pilot farms to engage in fattening cattle over the wet season. If the farms are successful, strictly supervised settlement schemes could be evolved, based on the methods they prove.

In reporting on the areas that appear best suited for settlement, the committee has recommended a closer survey in the Tipperary Land System, a 10,000-square-mile area running north-west from the town of Katherine. The Government is taking action to implement the idea. Rice, pasture plants and fodder crops, peanuts and cotton are the crops the committee feels are most likely to prove economic. (A private organisation has been developing a promising commercial rice-growing project at Humpty Doo, near Darwin, and aims at the progressive utilisation of 500,000 acres.)

The committee says that any idea of developing the Territory on a grand scale by irrigation is far from reality. But, in the Alice Springs area, there were prospects that underground water might prove sufficient for the irrigated production of 10,000 acres of annual crops. The report comes at a time when considerable public interest is being taken in the need to bring population to the sparsely settled northern half of Australia, including not only the Northern Territory, but large areas of Western Australia and Northern Queensland. It indicates some of the difficulties —and hopes—involved.

NEW ZEALAND

Christmas in New Zealand is never white, except for mountaineers. Yet the weather—here it is early summer—has had surprisingly little influence in determining the nature of the festival in this country. After making due allowances for the climate it might very well be a traditional English Christmas, celebrated in the same spirit and with much the same customs. Snow and red holly berries appear on many Christmas cards; shops and hotel bars do their biggest business of the year; brass bands playing carols tour round on trucks; a great deal of goodwill to all men and very little mistletoe is in evidence. The young, with parental encouragement, expect a rotund Santa Claus, obviously clad for Polar conditions, to insert himself down a narrow chimney beneath which, fortunately, no fire is likely to be smouldering at this time of the year.

Christmas Day observance is like Sunday, with morning Church services, most places of amusement closed, no organised sport and as many people as possible—even the postman—having a holiday that will extend over Boxing Day. Even in the warm New Zealand climate plum pudding is regarded as a Christmas dinner essential, but for the main dish turkey is not much in favour. The popular selection is a choice piece of lamb, with mint sauce, green peas and boiled new potatoes, the vegetables having been grown especially for the occasion in the home garden.

Christmas in Australia. A crowd gathers on the lawns in front of the Federal Parliament House in Canberra to join in the singing of carols on Christmas Eve

Christmas dinner is eaten in the sunshine on Bondi Beach, Sydney. It is a long-standing custom among Australians to have Christmas meals outdoors in the summer

WEALTH

Developing the Australian Northern Territory; Christmas in New Zealand; India's need for foreign aid; Nigeria's plea for Human Rights

The items in "The Voice of the Commonwealth" are contributed and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor of "The Sphere"

New Zealand's Christmas is in one way markedly different from Britain's, as it really involves a double celebration. The second reason for jubilation is that Christmas marks the end of a year's work and the start of the holiday season.

The end of the school year comes about ten days before Christmas, and with it a long vacation until the beginning of February. Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day, are all New Zealand public holidays. January 2, although not a public holiday, is written in to a good many awards as a holiday, including one for shop assistants which means that most shops close on that day. In practice it has come to as near a public holiday as possible without full-scale official status. If any of these days fall on a Saturday or Sunday, a compensatory holiday is given on the next week-day. Most New Zealanders, therefore, expect four days of holiday over the Christmas-New Year period, and the practice of adding these to the two-week annual holiday means that, with New Zealand's five-day working week, nearly three weeks' annual holiday can be enjoyed if a start is made at Christmas.

The result is a general stoppage of commerce and industry. Nearly all large factories, and most offices, close completely for the holiday period, and from Boxing Day onwards the New Zealander who regards Christmas Day as a day to be spent at home with his family, and in most cases spends it there, sets out for his holiday location. The general preference is for somewhere beside the sea either in a seaside cottage, or "bach," or in a caravan or tent. For those who have different tastes plenty of variety is offered; summer sport is in full swing and many of the major events of the season take place in this period.

The strain that is placed on services by a large proportion of the population taking holidays at the same time is admitted. There is a case for staggering holidays but no positive steps to achieve this have yet been taken, and New Zealanders seem happy enough to continue the present practice. One defect in the present arrangement, however, comes fairly persistently to their notice. The early summer weather, from Christmas to mid-January, is far from dependable; from mid-January to late February it is more settled. Summer is then at its peak and the hottest weather of the season is experienced—too late, however, for the worker to enjoy it to the full, for he is then firmly committed to another year's labour.

INDIA

(This is the second of two reports on the Third Five-Year Plan)

During the first two Five-Year Plans, total loans of the order of Rs. 13,040,000,000 (£978,000,000) were authorised as external assistance by the World Bank, U.S., Russia, Britain, West Germany, Canada and Japan, to mention only the countries and international agencies whose assistance was of a large size. In addition, India was provided with Rs. 3,420,000,000 as assistance by way of grants. These grants came from America, member countries of the Colombo Plan, and Norway. Projects of development in the public sector benefited primarily from this assistance, but the share of assistance given to private projects was also large. For the Third Plan, so far, a total amount of Rs. 9,150,000,000 has been promised—by America (Rs. 6,080,000,000), Russia (Rs. 2,400,000,000), Czechoslovakia (Rs. 230,000,000), Yugoslavia (Rs. 190,000,000), Poland (Rs. 140,000,000) and Switzerland (Rs. 110,000,000). The balance of about Rs. 22,850,000,000 needs still to be arranged. It is hoped that assistance from foreign countries, as well as international agencies like the World Bank, will amount to about Rs. 32,000,000,000.

At the present time what is popularly known as the "Aid-India Club" is engaged in examining the requirements of India in respect of foreign assistance for the Third Plan. It held its last meeting at Paris in September 1960. The U.S.A., U.K., West Germany, Canada, Japan and Holland participated in this meeting as full members and Italy sent an observer. In the next meeting, which is expected to be held in the spring of 1961, some other countries might also join. The Club has taken a sympathetic but realistic view of India's foreign assistance needs for the Third Plan.

The prospects are that India will receive assistance from foreign countries on a far bigger scale than she has received in the first two Five-Year Plans. The three international bankers and the World Bank Mission agree without reservations that India typically represents the case of under-developed countries in respect of foreign assistance for development. The policy that would be followed in regard to India cannot, of course, be different from the policy applied to other under-developed countries, with such variations as local conditions require. The three bankers have positively expressed the view that a much larger proportion of aid ought to be provided in the form of grants. Loans will necessarily constitute the major part of assistance.

They emphasise that the conditions of repayment, including its period, the rate of interest, the currency in which repayment is to be made, should not put a heavy burden on India's current resources. This is for the obvious reason that the continuously increasing and competing claims of expenditure on development and on debt repayment cannot be met except with great hardship. Until self-generating growth is achieved, the burden of repayment of foreign debts should not put a heavy strain on India's balance of payments and thereby create difficulties or deadlocks in the implementation of development programmes. It should, therefore, be spread over a long period of years. This is also the view endorsed fully by the World Bank Mission.

Whether India has qualified herself for adequate help can best be told in the words of the World Bank Mission. It has stated categorically: "The Mission believes that India has demonstrated a capacity to make good use of foreign aid, and that the continuance of aid on a generous scale during the Third Plan can be justified on economic grounds. It is of the greatest importance that most of this aid should be extended in a form that does not add to the already heavy burden of debt repayment."

Mr. M. R. Desai (left), the Indian Finance Minister, and Mr. M. Shoaib, the Finance Minister of Pakistan, meet in Delhi. The purpose of their talks was to consider the financial claims and counter-claims from their respective countries arising from the Partition of 1947 which followed hand-over of power by Great Britain. The discussions, which have been going on for many years, have so far reached no conclusions

NIGERIA

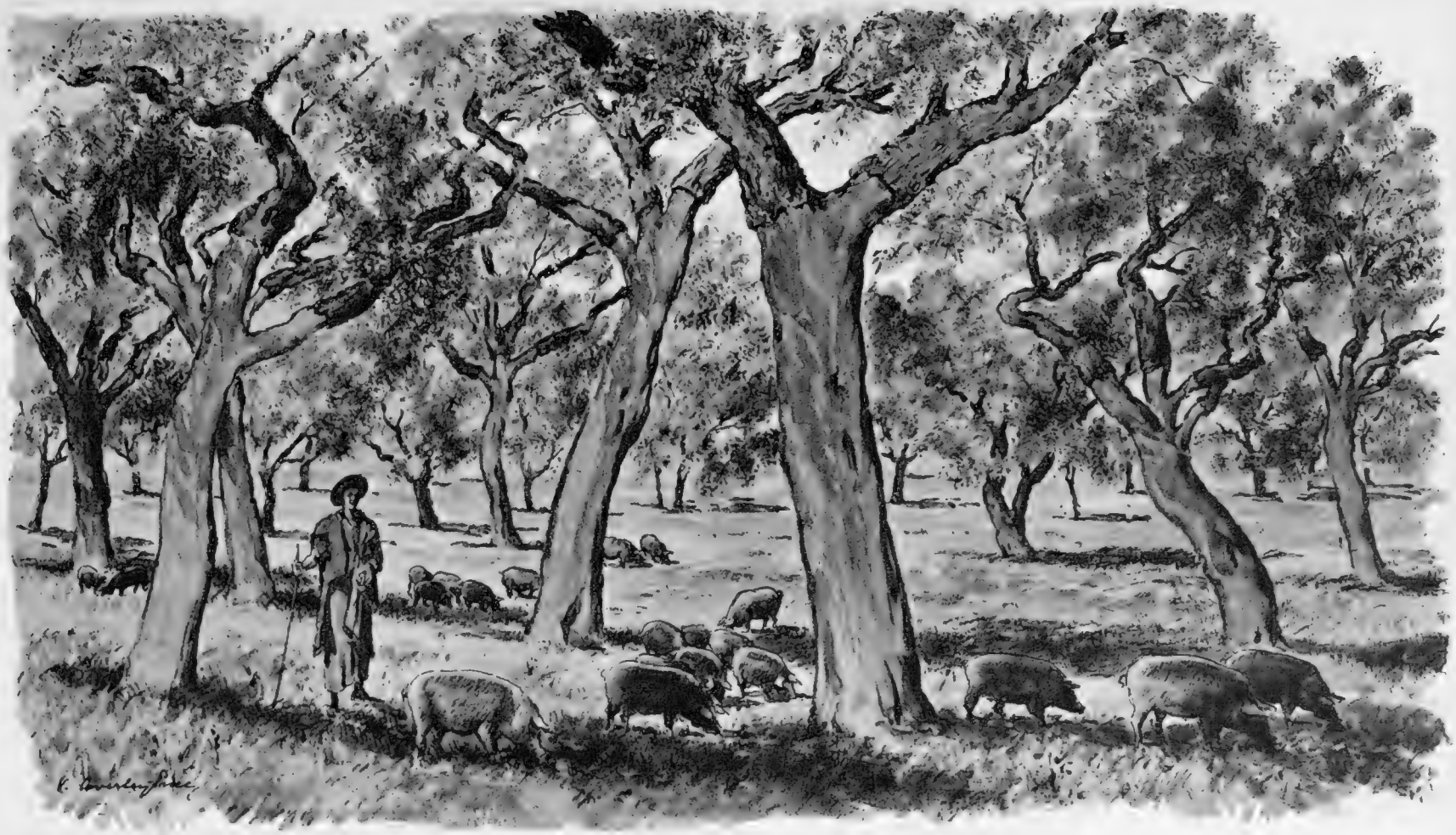
Dr. Azikiwe's Inaugural Address as Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief, which he delivered at Lagos, deserves the widest publicity. In it he outlined Nigeria's attitude to the Commonwealth, the United Nations and racial relationship in Africa. His theme was that "the challenge of Nigeria as a free State in twentieth-century Africa is the need to revive the stature of man in Africa and restore the dignity of man in the world." Nigerians felt bound to criticise certain nations in their attitude towards the darker races. The Commonwealth was to be valued for its "very variety and multiplicity of outlook," nevertheless, "Nigerians cannot be expected to be supine when such a basic human right as respect for human dignity is violated with impunity in any part of the Commonwealth or in any country in the world . . . we cannot concede that it is in our national interest to fraternise with such nations which practise race prejudice and we must not acquiesce in such an outrageous insult on the black race."

Turning to the United Nations, Dr. Azikiwe declared that within its rank and file "there are many states who deny their citizens equality of opportunity and deprive them of fundamental human rights, for the simple reason that the colour of their skin is black or that they are natives of Africa." Why, he asked, did many member-states in the U.N. look with disfavour at the idea of promulgating an international convention on human rights. "Why are the leading nations of the world interested merely in *declaring* their adherence to the ideals of basic human rights but are not prepared to sign a binding international convention? Could it be that such nations believe that talks of a rule of law and respect for human dignity are outside the periphery of world politics? Or could it be that such nations merely claim to be protagonists of democracy but do not believe in this ideology as a practicable proposition and way of life?" The Governor-General pointed out that only Britain and a few members of the Western European Union had signed the European Convention on Human Rights. In conclusion, he said that in Nigeria the past was gone with all its bitterness and rancour and recriminations. "The future is before us; the main issue is what is right for the Federation of Nigeria and for humanity."

BOUND FOR THE SKIES

Above: A Comet 4C jet airliner takes off on its maiden flight from Hatfield Aerodrome, in Hertfordshire, the home of The De Havilland Aircraft Co., Ltd. The first of four being built for Middle East Airlines by De Havilland, it was handed over last week. This aircraft will begin passenger flights early in January, and the other three will be in service in April. They will be used on routes connecting Beirut with London and other European capitals. Services will also operate as far east as Bombay and Karachi. Viscounts will fly on routes to airports which have comparatively short runways. The new Comet 4C's, which have a new livery, can carry 79 passengers: usually 20 first class and 59 tourist

Below: The first Convair 990 (previously known as the 600) jet airliner is seen at Lindbergh Field, in San Diego, California. It has been built by the Convair Division of the General Dynamics Corporation, and will have cruising speeds of up to 640 m.p.h. At such a speed air passes over the upper surface of the wings faster than the speed of sound. The engines of this new liner—General Electric CJ-805-23 turbofans—require an entirely new type of engine pod. It is greater in diameter than previous models, so that large quantities of air may be drawn in around the basic engine. This is said to give up to 40 per cent. increased efficiency. The first flight of the new 990 is scheduled for January



In the autumn large herds of pigs are turned loose in the forests of cork oaks in the Alentejo Province to fatten on the acorns. The trunks of the trees have been stripped of their cork and will not be stripped again for nine years

CORK FROM PORTUGAL

Written and Illustrated by **VICTOR COVERLEY-PRICE**

Wherever I go for a holiday, I like to have a definite objective. Too often nowadays, tourists have to follow an itinerary that is not their own choice. They are conducted in parties round the palaces and castles mentioned in the brochure and they are allowed to pause for a few minutes to admire a panorama that " should not be missed." But they have little time to explore according to their own inclinations and they return home with only the collective impression designed for them by the tourist agency.

It is much more fun—and more rewarding—to plan one's own treasure hunt: perhaps to walk for days over the mountain passes, from A to B; or to take a sketch-book in search of picturesque fishing villages. Choose your own objective and you are sure to come across unexpected gems. This time, when I was going to Portugal, I chose cork. Like most people, I touch cork nearly every day; opening a bottle or standing on a bath-mat. But, until I went to Portugal, I knew little about it, except that it is the bark of a tree. I had heard that more than half the cork used in the world comes from Portugal, so it seemed the obvious key to that country.

During the hottest months of the year, the trees are stripped and the cork-bark is piled in enormous stacks to be carried to the factories, often in ox-carts. The curving bark is placed hollow side downwards. At the factory, the first process is to boil the sheets in water and then flatten them

The tree from which the material comes is called the cork oak—*Quercus suber*. Its dull green leaves, paler underneath, are not lobed like those of our English oaks, but have a more regular outline. It grows wild in all the countries round the western half of the Mediterranean, but it will not grow easily anywhere else. However, there are a few cork oaks in Britain, including one at Kew Gardens.

Portugal, which enjoys the warm sunshine and small rainfall of the Mediterranean, tempered by the influence of the Atlantic, has the ideal climate for cork. There are forests of cork oaks in many parts of the country, but particularly in the Alentejo, the largest province extending south of the river Tagus. The trees, widely spaced to admit air and sunshine, are cultivated and pruned at regular intervals. Here I found some of the most fascinating scenery. I can still visualise the scene, in the golden glow before sunset, when a swineherd wrapped in his cloak was guarding a herd of pigs under the sombre oaks. A line of pine trees stood in silhouette along a low ridge and a group of tall eucalyptus trees rose darkly against the sky. I could well believe that there are still a few wolves in the region.

As cork is one of Portugal's most valuable products, there are laws governing its exploitation. The bark may not be removed from a tree until it is sufficiently mature, and then only from a part of the tree—the trunk or the branches. The first crop, called virgin cork, has split and cracked during growth and is very rough. A fresh coat of cork takes nine years to grow, so a tree may only be stripped every nine years. But the later crops are of much better quality and may be quite 2 ins. thick. If a tree lives for 150 years, it yields a lot of cork.

(Continued on following pages)

CORK FROM PORTUGAL

(*Continued from previous page*)

The stripping, which has to take place during the hottest months of the year, is done by experts, using special axes to make circular cuts round the trunk and vertical cuts to join them. Great skill is needed to avoid cutting the *cambium*—the layer between the bark and the wood in which the next year's growth takes place. Then the bark is gently peeled from the trunk in big curved sheets, to be added to the mountainous stacks awaiting removal to the factories. Generally they are taken away in carts drawn by oxen or mules. The trunks or branches of trees that have just been stripped have a rich orange-chestnut colour, but this gradually darkens until it is nearly black.

The first process in preparing cork for the market is to boil it in water to remove mineral salts and tannins and to increase its elasticity. Then it is pressed flat in a stack and later sorted by specialists according to quality and thickness. Finally it is baled for export or for distribution to factories. Besides being light and elastic, cork is impervious to liquids and gases and almost immune from rotting. It absorbs vibrations and it is a good insulator for heat, sound and electricity. These qualities make it valuable for many different uses.

A twenty-minute trip by ferry across the Tagus from Lisbon and a short ride by car took me to a factory for making bottle stoppers: what we call simply "corks." This is one of the chief uses of "natural" cork. Machines with sharp cutters punch out the corks from strips cut from the sheets and there are intricate devices for making corks of special shapes and sizes. Most of the operatives are women, who also sort the corks into huge baskets and give them any necessary finishing touches.

In another factory, amid the din and dust of the crushing machines, I saw mountains of cork—largely the "waste" from bottle cork factories, mixed with virgin cork—being reduced to small granules. These are separated by sieves according to their size and can be used for packing fragile goods or soft fruit like grapes. But most of the crushed material is heated and pressed into moulds, from which it emerges in large blocks of "agglomerated" cork. The heat brings out the natural resins, causing the granules to stick together; but for certain purposes, requiring greater strength, a special glue is added. Numerous objects can be cut from the blocks, such as thick bath-mats, table-mats and paper-thin sheets for making washers and gaskets for machinery. A great deal of agglomerated cork is used in building, for insulation, for absorbing vibration and for deadening noise. Acoustical cork-board, for lining ceilings, walls and floors in hospitals, schools and so on, has a pleasing appearance and wears very well.

It was partly my pursuit of cork that took me to Sintra, with its palaces and Moorish castle on the wooded hills about 15 miles from Lisbon. There I saw the little monastery which, 400 years ago, was entirely lined with cork. At the old fishing ports of Sesimbra, Setúbal and Nazaré I found not only thousands of cork floats in everyday use, but enough picturesque boats and colourful fishermen's costumes to delight any artist.

While driving among the vineyards of Estremadura, I was shown a village wine-press and I was welcomed into a wine factory to see all its operations. I watched yokes of sturdy oxen bringing in huge tubs of grapes from the fields and it was a new experience for me to drink a glass of wine drawn straight from a vat containing more than 20,000 litres (4,400 gallons). Embedded in the ground outside the factory were eighteen gigantic spherical tanks. They had been made by coating balloons with cement. Each contained 250,000 litres of wine. The idea of bottling all that was a sobering thought: 4,500,000 corks!

My pursuit of cork led me to many other interesting places and I believe that I now know more about Portugal than I might have learned during an "inclusive tour."

A sketch-map of southern Portugal showing forests of cork oaks on the plains of the Alentejo Province

It takes an expert to use the specia bark from the tree with as few

At a factory on the River Tagus, near Lisbon, bales of granulated cork are loaded into a sailing barge. They are destined for export. Crushed cork is also used at the factory for making agglomerated sheets, which are then cut into boards and other articles

At Nazaré, a well-known fishing port, fishermen mend their nets and adjust the cork floats—a common sight in any fishing village in Portugal. Behind is a typical fishing-boat, with its curved prow on which is painted an eye, to ward off evil

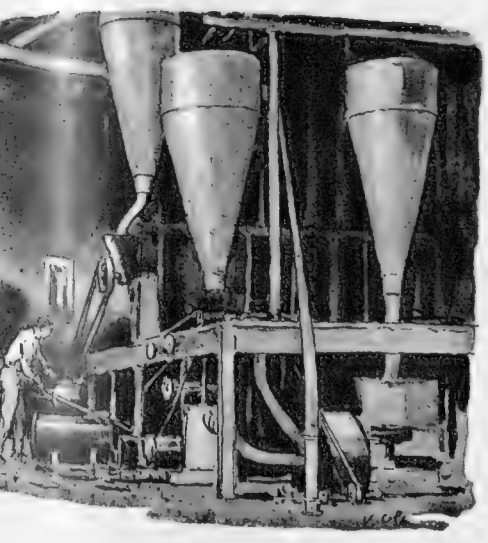
cut the cork
s as possible

Cutting the sheets into the strips or frames from which bottle corks will be punched

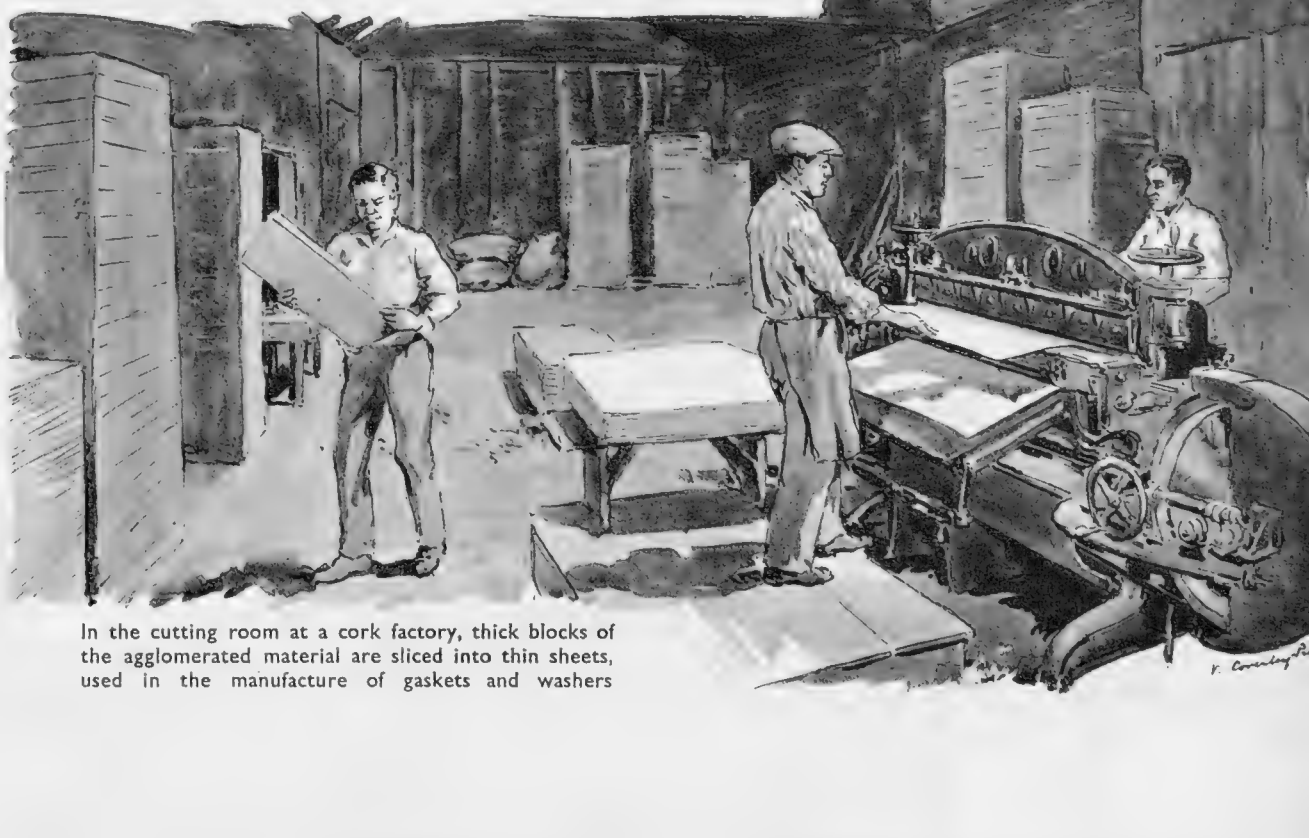
A woman operator guides the frames into the machine punching out bottle corks. The waste goes into the baskets on her left, to be used in granulation or agglomeration

The "Cork Monastery," at Sintra. Four centuries ago this small building, which housed only about a dozen monks in tiny cells, was almost entirely lined with the bark of the cork oak, as a protection against cold and damp. Even the little chapel was lined and the refectory benches were covered. Some of the cork is still in place to-day

Each of the vats (right), in a modern wine factory in Portugal, contains about 4,400 gallons of wine. Millions of corks are used every year to bottle the wine—the bark of the cork oak is especially suitable for making stoppers for wine bottles of different shapes and sizes



Crushing plant reduces the cork to small granules—this is the first stage in the making of agglomerated cork



In the cutting room at a cork factory, thick blocks of the agglomerated material are sliced into thin sheets, used in the manufacture of gaskets and washers

BRIAN VESEY-FITZGERALD

WORSHIPPER OF HELLEBORES

Many years ago, when I began to make this garden, I planted our two native hellebores: *Helleborus viridis*, whose country name is Bear's Foot, and *H. fætidus*, which is sometimes called Setterwort, but more usually, and I think unjustifiably, Stinking Hellebore. I did this because I am that sort of a gardener: I like exploring the less-frequented byways of gardening. (To be honest, this is because I am not an expert and I like to have an excuse handy when my plants fail.) But I did it also because I like green flowers. In this I know I am unlike most people. Flowers are admired chiefly just because they are not green. Greenness in flowers is part of a policy of self-concealment, and, it must be admitted, self-concealment is precisely what most people do not want in a garden plant. But our two native hellebores bear flowers which have sufficient character and beauty to stand out even against the greenness of their natural background. When in bloom in a garden they are most decorative.

A spray of delicate Christmas Roses, photographed by John Topham

Both are rare in the wild. I hasten to say that I did not dig them up. I took seeds, without any real hope that they would come to anything: and had success. I also had a further surprise. In the wild, *H. viridis* flowers in March and April: *H. fætidus* from February to April. In my garden the first flowering of *H. viridis* was early in February; that of *H. fætidus* in mid-January. I like flowers which will delight me out of doors in winter. (Since then *H. fætidus*, which has naturalised itself with me, has twice flowered in December: *H. viridis*, after getting over that first enthusiasm, has returned to more conservative habits, though it is usually in flower during very early March.)

That first success, the sight of the green flowers (purplish-green really in the case of *H. fætidus* as opposed to the bright apple-green of *H. viridis*) in a garden that was then very bare in winter, made me a hellebore worshipper: and I have been one ever since. I should think that over the years I must have tried pretty well every variety of hellebore in commerce in this country, with anything but uniform success. It is this that makes gardening the most perplexing and vexatious, and the most delightful, of pursuits. I have no idea at all why I have succeeded with some, or, rather, why some have done well with me, and failed completely with others. In each case I have done everything that the books tell you to do. The fact of the matter, it seems to me, is that plants are individuals, with likes and dislikes of their own. I like to think so, for it helps to excuse my failures, which, judging by the information given in the books and in some of the catalogues, are otherwise inexcusable.

There are general rules which must be observed. Hellebores dislike a lot of wind. They like a place in half-shade and a soil that never dries out. Most of the species grow wild in woodland or copse, where both full sun and complete drought are rare, and it is generally a pretty good rule when in doubt with garden flowers to follow the rule of the wild. I have no woodland, but I have found that they do very well in a shrubbery, provided that sufficient space is allowed for them to become large clumps. They also do well beneath single trees or if partially shaded by two trees.

I have two fine clumps, one of *H. corsicus*, an evergreen which grows to 2 ft. or so and bears beautiful big heads of nodding cups, the colour of green apples, in March, and one of *H. atrorubens*, which carries great reddish-purple flowers, almost 2 ins. in diameter, in January, which grow in the shelter of a wall, although there are two ornamental conifers nearby, surely a most unlikely situation for hellebores. There are Lenten Roses (*H. orientalis*) in both my herbaceous borders. It seems to me that if a hellebore likes you it will do well anywhere: if it does not, however much attention you give it is not going to make it change its mind.

If it does like you, it does not even mind being disturbed. All the books stress that they do not like being disturbed, and especially the Christmas Rose (*H. niger*), which has acquired a fearsome reputation in this respect. I have not found this to be true. There are few perennials more perennial than the hellebore. True, plants that have been disturbed may take a year or even two to re-establish themselves, but once they have done so they will go on improving season after season. But if you disturb them you must be careful to lift a large lump of earth with them, so that the roots are not too harassed. It is not a good idea to play about with a hoe around Lenten Roses in a herbaceous border. They will soon let you know that they do not approve.

But, though I do not believe that hellebores mind being moved (provided that they like you), there can be no doubt that they do very well indeed if left undisturbed. The first one that I had after my encouraging experience with our two native ones was the Christmas Rose. In those days it was not a question of making both ends meet—there was a fairly permanent gap between them. I could not afford a plant. It is not a cheap plant to buy now; then it was definitely expensive. But I was fortunate in being given a piece by a professional gardener.

That plant has been in the same place, quite undisturbed, for thirty years now, and I think that it is still increasing in strength. It took two years to settle down, to make up its mind whether it liked me or not, but it has never failed me since. Year after year, and often actually on Christmas Day, it produces its beautiful greenish-white flowers with their golden centres to delight me. Even this year (I am writing well before Christmas), after what is admitted by the experts to have been the wettest autumn for a great many years, it looks to me as though I shall have flowers for picking on Christmas Day. It is a wonderful picker, the flowers lasting for weeks indoors, if you split the stems.

Except for putting a cloche over it to prevent splash, I do nothing for my Christmas Rose. I do not give it a mulch of compost or leaf-mould or rotted manure, as recommended in the books. There was one stage when I meant to do so but there was always so much else to do. Now, I do not bother. I just leave it alone.

But what it does for me ! John Gerard, in his *Herball*, recommended a purgation of hellebore (and he was writing of the Christmas Rose) as " good for mad and furious men." Miss Sackville-West believes that he was quoting Epictetus, who, writing in the first century A.D., remarks that the more firmly deluded a madman, the more hellebore he needs. I cannot speak of its purgative powers. But I do know that there is nothing more soothing, nothing more uplifting to the spirit, than to see the flowers of the Christmas Rose shyly peeping between their leaves on a desolate winter's day.

M. R. Smith of Westminster (left) and C. C. King

M. A. Hall, in an aerial tussle with King. Left is H. M. Martin

PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOOTBALL

WESTMINSTER v CHARTERHOUSE

A dominant Westminster team gained a decisive 4—1 win over Charterhouse in the match played at Vincent Square, in London. Westminster exerted pressure from the kick-off, and only a succession of brilliant saves by goalkeeper C. N. H. Cain prevented an early score. Eventually, the first goal came. Right-wing M. R. Smith drove a hard shot inside the post after collecting a cross kick from D. A. Roy. Continually on the attack, the home side's forwards created many openings and, from one, M. K. Cooper ran through to score the second goal. R. W. Pettit, centre-half and captain of Westminster, gave an impeccable display of control and distribution. His wing-halves, A. J. Machray and C. J. Alderson, were also much in evidence. D. A. Roy made the score 3—0 before the interval, and M. A. Hall headed the fourth goal in the second half. Charterhouse, with centre-half H. M. Martin outstanding in defence, refused to give up. Shortly before the end they had their reward. From a breakaway their inside-left, H. Arnold, shot past the advancing goalkeeper, M. J. Hopkin-Jones, to score.

Next week will be Uppingham v. Radley

Westminster's third goal, scored by D. A. Roy (centre background)

J. N. Garrow, Charterhouse inside-right, attempts a sliding tackle against Roy

Left: The Westminster goalkeeper, M. J. Hopkin-Jones, holds a shot. From left are H. G. L. Powell, R. W. Pettit, H. Arnold, and, behind the goalkeeper, A. J. Machray. (Westminster players in light shirts, Charterhouse in dark ones)

PICTURES OF THE YEAR

For news photographers the dark, troubled state of Africa over many months has presented tragic opportunities to take the telling picture. The winner of the News Category in the annual British Press Pictures of the Year competition is a South African, free-lance J. J. Wesselo, for his photograph of the assassination attempt on the South African Prime Minister, Dr. Verwoerd. New records were created by the entry for the competition, jointly sponsored by *Encyclopædia Britannica* and the Institute of British Photographers—328 Press photographers entered 2,354 pictures for the seven categories—Portfolio, Sequence, News, Royal, Feature, Sport and Colour. The 114 black-and-white and two colour pictures selected by the judges, after being seen in London, are to be exhibited throughout Great Britain, Australia, and South Africa during 1961. This was the thirteenth time that the competition has been held. The winner of the Portfolio Category and photographer of the year is George Stephenson, of P.A.-Reuter. He will hold the Hector McNeil Trophy for twelve months and received a " replica," in the form of an engraved silver ash-tray, and 100 guineas. Second in the Portfolio was Terry Fincher, last year's winner and the only man to have won twice.

Princess Margaret and Mr. Antony Armstrong-Jones—" Just Engaged," by Reginald Davis, free lance. The photograph gained the second award in the Colour Category

Left:
Princess Anne—" Fairy Princess," by Terry Fincher, of the *Daily Herald*. It won the second award in the Portfolio Category

Below:
" Won by a Nose," by Reg Lancaster, *Daily Express*, Glasgow. The picture won the first award in the Sports Category

" Me and My Mum "—another of the pictures which gained Terry Fincher his Portfolio award

"Three-Point Landing" by Victor Blackman, *Daily Express*—hon. mention, Sports Category

"Skydiver," by Terry Fincher, of the *Daily Herald*

Left:
"Dr. Verwoerd Shot," photographed by J. J. Wesselo, free-lance, Johannesburg. The picture gained the first award in the News Category

Right:
"Congo Independence Day," by Ian Berry, *Drum*, South Africa. First award in the Sequence Category

Below:
"Race Finish Drama," by J. R. Macnee, Sport and General—second award in the Sports Category

Below: "The Show Must Go On," by George Stephenson, first in the Portfolio Category

TRAVEL

THE TREASURES OF BELGIUM

By **GORDON COOPER**

Formerly one of the most popular tourist countries in Europe, Belgium to-day does not get the attention its cities of art merit. How easily accessible they are. Whether you fly from Southend by the Channel Air Bridge to Ostend or cross over by steamer, the journey takes only a few hours. Indeed, a week-end in Belgium is most pleasant, although a longer sojourn is obviously more rewarding.

Brussels, the charming capital, makes the best base, and it is well worth considering the purchase of a 5-day season ticket which allows you unlimited travel during this period. There are also 10-day and 28-day season tickets, and the formalities are reduced to a minimum. The chief thing is to provide a passport-size photograph at any railway station booking office.

I have met people who say they don't like Brussels. I cannot understand this. I find the city endlessly fascinating, while its medieval Grand' Place is as enchanting a square as any in Europe. My favourite restaurant, Chantraine's, is within a stone's throw. Three other major art cities are Bruges, Ghent and Antwerp; while runners-up include Malines, Lierre, Louvain, Tournai, Mons, Oudenarde, Liége and Tongres.

Bruges, with its medieval buildings reflected in still canal waters, appeals strongly to one's imagination. To wander along its cobbled streets is a delight, although sometimes hard on the feet. There is no better time to visit this city than the beginning of May, when the freshness of new foliage enhances the mellowness of the old buildings. Among my favourite sights are St. John's Hospital, the Memlinc Museum, the lovely béguinage, the adjoining Lac d'Amour or Minnewater, the Town Hall in the market square, the Brangwyn Museum, the Groeninge Art Gallery, with many famous masterpieces, and not least the Church of Notre Dame, whose chief treasure is a statue of the Madonna and Child by Michelangelo; the last alone justifies a trip to Bruges.

While Ghent has not the picture-postcard appeal of Bruges, it offers the most brilliant tower-view in Europe—from St. Michael's Bridge. With the three superb towers in view there are the lovely medieval houses of the Quai aux Herbes to your left—the loveliest quay in the world—and just a glimpse of the Castle beyond. I like to pay my respects at the burial-place in St. Nicholas's Church of Oliver Minjau, who lies there with his wife. He lived to be 152 years old (slightly less than our " Old Parr ") and had thirty-one children: all the family, however, died in the plague. When the Emperor Charles V visited Ghent in 1526 this father with twenty-one sons who joined the procession attracted his attention. Also to be visited without fail is the Cathedral of St. Bavon, which contains " The Adoration of the Mystic Lamb," the masterpiece of the Flemish School of Painting, by the brothers van Eyck.

The Zimmer Astronomical Clock at Lierre

The Castle of the Counts (ninth century) is an amazing stronghold; a splendid example of a medieval castle, and massive enough, it would seem, to resist any attack. In its museum there is a macabre collection of instruments of torture and execution. Preferable to grim torture chambers are the two peaceful and other-worldly béguinages, while there are also some good museums, especially notable being that devoted to decorative arts. Should you happen to be in this city during July and August, visit the neighbouring begonia fields, which offer a more colourful sight, in my opinion, than the much better-known tulip fields of Holland.

Antwerp, Belgium's largest port, breathes an atmosphere of art, starting with the Cathedral, the most beautiful Gothic church in the Low Countries. Here are three masterpieces by Rubens, whose work is also to be found in the Art Gallery, and do not miss Rubens' House and the unique Plantin Museum, one of the most attractively-housed collections in Europe. A day is far too short to explore properly this great art city.

Of the minor art cities, Malines has its Cathedral of St. Rombold, whose carillon is the finest in Belgium. A stop for one of the weekly concerts is well worthwhile. All traffic in the city ceases for this musical event. Here, too, exists the only carillon school in the world, attended by students from various countries who are taking the three-year course.

There is no more typically Flemish town than Lierre. It is an artist's dream and seems almost too good to be true. Comparatively few tourists go there, although it is within easy reach of Antwerp and Malines. The Renaissance Town Hall and the Church of St. Gommaire are the chief sights. The Zimmer Astronomical Clock is very curious, and the béguinage perhaps the most enchanting in Belgium.

Louvain has in its Town Hall (fifteenth century) one of the most beautiful buildings in the world, and for centuries its university was the most famous in Christendom. St. Gertrude's Church has some glorious oak-carved choir stalls, but, in a way, the town's main appeal lies in its typical student atmosphere. Incidentally, four miles outside the town, on the road to Wavre, is one of the loveliest of British war cemeteries—a perfect resting-place.

The Romanesque Cathedral in Tournai is the most striking and finest ecclesiastical building in Belgium. No other town has its history more linked with England, and, indeed, for five years Henry VIII took possession and walled it in. Mons has a different kind of link for us, and its Cathedral of St. Waltrudis repays a visit. Any bachelor who strokes the head of a small wrought-iron ape to be found at the main entrance to the Town Hall will, it is claimed, be married within the year.

Oudenarde, with its battle link with England, has a magnificent Town Hall, also other fine medieval buildings. Liége offers its Palace of the Prince-Bishops (sixteenth century), as well as several interesting churches and museums. It is handy for trips to many picturesque villages in the Belgian Ardennes. One of these is Tongres, the oldest town in Belgium, which possesses many rich treasures.

A peaceful, interesting holiday is what I am sure you will get by going to Belgium. Why not try as a start a week-end trip. You will surely want to return for a longer stay.

In Antwerp—behind the statue to Rubens rises the Cathedral, seen from the south

LONDON TO ISTANBUL BY AIR

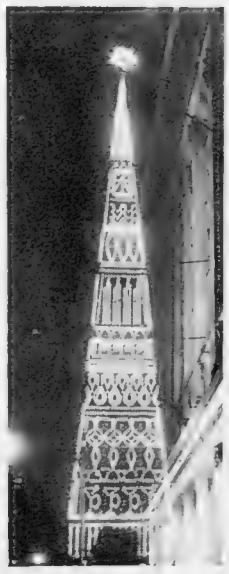
Recently I flew Swiss Air to Istanbul on the exceedingly comfortable Caravelle service. Airliners are changed at Zurich and then the plane touches down at Athens. Leaving London at 10 a.m., we arrived at our hotel in Yesilköy (Istanbul Airport) at 20.20 hours local time—18.20 hours our time, *i.e.*, just over eight hours' flight. The food, as on all these super jets, is excellent and ample, and every detail is attended to so that a child could make the journey without mishap. Not adventurous, but comfortable and swift. The fares are: 1st class £143 1s. return, 2nd class £112 1s. return.

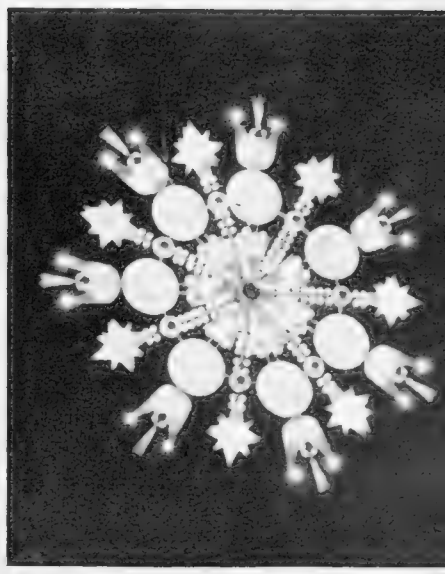
THE LIGHTS OF CHRISTMAS

ZURICH: Arches of lights and stars are strung across the Altstadt, in the main shopping area

WASHINGTON, D.C.: A street in the American capital is bathed in the glow of lights put up by shop owners. The decorations cost several thousand pounds. It is likely that these lights will be left up after Christmas for the inauguration of the new President on January 20

NEW YORK CITY: A 65-ft.-high Christmas tree, festooned with bulbs of different colours and sizes, forms the focal point of the Rockefeller Centre's display. In the foreground are other illuminated decorations which, with the tree lights, were switched on in a traditional ceremony on December 8





In New York's Manhattan, and London's Oxford Street

LONDON: Angels with trumpets face each other across Regent Street, which is again this year the centre of the London illuminations. The Christmas lights in the West End were switched on towards the end of last month. Since then thousands of Londoners and visitors have made special trips to see the decorated streets and shops

BOOKS

DEDICATED ANGLOPHILE

Henry James' "English Hours"; autobiography and biography; and this week's fiction

It is odd to reflect that it is now between eighty and ninety years since Henry James wrote those essays on England which proved him not only a dedicated Anglophile but an author as capable of directness as of delicacy. The involutions of his sentences, the obscurity of his images or the elaboration of his writing, these are scarcely to be found in ENGLISH HOURS (Heinemann. 25s.) which has now been freshly published with line drawings by Mr. Anthony Gross and an introduction and notes by Dr. Alma Louise Lowe. Dr. Lowe shares with the subject of her study a profound, American-based love for England and appears to feel for it, as Henry James did so many years ago, a tenderness and a comprehension which are rare even among our own countrymen.

Henry James was fairly young when he wrote the material in this volume, but not even its most enthusiastic pages (and not all of them are that) depend on the thoughtless spontaneity of youth. He was to settle in England himself, to consider London the literary capital of the world and to urge many of his contemporaries to come over from the United States. Before the end of his life Henry James became a British citizen and he received the Order of Merit in recognition of his unceasing interest in Anglo-American unity. Knowing all this as a background, one can appreciate all the more keenly the insight, the vividness and the truly pictorial quality of his writing on London or cathedral cities; on universities; on the remotest and most tranquil countryside and on, of all things, Derby Day. The latter, incidentally, treated brilliantly and with a humour that might confound many of James' critics.

There follow the autobiographies of two women, each most remarkable in her own different way but with one thing at least—the uncommon quality of a rare vitality—shared between them. KALEIDOSCOPE—*A Family of Flyers* (Arthur Barker. 21s.) is the story of Mrs. Linda Rhodes-Moorhouse, who was married to a young pioneer of flight, the first air V.C. as he later became, and shared with him many ski-ing, racing and flying exploits, notably a honeymoon spent in a successful attempt to cross the Channel in a three-seater aircraft. After Will Rhodes-Moorhouse's death in the First War, the author brought up young Will, their only child, who was to become a remarkable skier and flyer and, in his turn, be killed in the Battle of Britain. This is the story of a gallant wife and mother, and a very exceptional woman.

The other autobiographer, Miss Nancy Price, gives evidence in her writing of equally strong characteristics of another kind. EACH IN HIS OWN WAY (Muller. 16s.) is the story of a woman who has been a distinguished actress and stage producer and who can, by the same token, tell a good story about Duse or about Bernhardt; a writer and—above any other interests—a lover of the country. Her book, which is mildly and pleasantly reminiscent, is one of her several personal chronicles.

SIR ALAN HERBERT is with Mrs. Joan Nicholson at the first annual award dinner of the Romantic Novelists' Association, held in London. He was the guest of honour and presented the Simon Dare Memorial Prize to Mrs. Nicholson for her book *The Sea Pearl*. The Association's own award was given to Mary Howard for her thirty-second novel, *More Than Friendship*

THE TURBULENT THIRTIES (Macdonald. 35s.) is an album-shaped book of theatrical reminiscence, records and photographs covering that period and succeeding *The Gay Twenties* which was also by Mr. J. C. Trewin with photographs from the collection—a priceless one by now—of Mr. Raymond Mander and Mr. Joe Mitchenson. A really invaluable record for the theatrically minded, which includes a sizeable chunk of the population.

SIR PATRICK HASTINGS: *His Life and Cases* (Heinemann. 30s.) is a biography of a great and lovable advocate by Professor H. Montgomery Hyde, in which are set down not only the very considerable triumphs of the man known so widely and affectionately as "Pat," but some of the circumstances in which his particular brilliance flourished. These included a blessedly happy family life, after an affectionate but extremely irregular childhood and unhappy experiences as a bored and frustrated schoolboy; an intelligence and a perception which verged on genius, and a natural, early-found inclination to the law. As Lord Birkett writes in his foreword: "He was the greatest cross-examiner I ever knew, and the very first time I saw him he had reached the peak of perfection." One speaks lightly of tributes and many have been paid to Sir Patrick Hastings, but this, surely, is one of the finest, to a man who was during his career not only King's Counsel but Member of Parliament, playwright and Attorney-General in the first Labour Government.

THE GLITTERING PRIZES (MacGibbon and Kee. 25s.) is a study of the first Earl of Birkenhead by Mr. William Camp, and the most candid thing I can say about it is that it adds precisely nothing to the information, the impression or the profoundly understanding character drawing of the biography written

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MICHELANGELO

A new biography of the Renaissance artist

"This solitary, this masterful and stern, life-wearied and labour-hardened man, in whose heart the springs of feeling were not truly opened until towards his sixtieth year," is the description given by one of his many previous biographers to Michelangelo. Dr. Charles Morgan, head of the Fine Arts Department at Amherst College, Massachusetts, clearly shares this view that Michelangelo found it intensely difficult to combine intellect and emotion, and his LIFE OF MICHELANGELO (Weidenfeld and Nicolson. 30s.) brings out the singular loneliness of the artist. This is a sensitive, simply-written biography, covering the eighty-nine years of Michelangelo's life, a heroic life and a noble one for all its possible personal incompleteness, and a triumph indeed in four separate realms of art.

If Michelangelo bestrode the Renaissance world like a colossus, John Hunter, the gruff, unlettered Scotsman from East Kilbride, "the founder of scientific surgery," in the same degree stood head and shoulders above his fellow-men in eighteenth-century England. In his biography, THE RELUCTANT SURGEON (Heinemann. 21s.), John Kobler shows Hunter as a man generations ahead of his time. His work in surgery and urology has only been fully appreciated in recent decades. A hundred years before Freud, Hunter grasped the psychical factors in disease. Unlike his contemporaries, he realised that surgery was often an admission of failure, hence his reluctance to use it. This is a deeply dramatic life-story, revealing a fiery and indefatigable genius, and one of the greatest benefactors of human kind. The author has done well to marshal the facts about such an abundantly full life in the space of a biography of normal length, this comparative brevity reflecting the intensity of Mr. Kobler's research and the measure of his understanding of the man.

China boasts a proud and ancient tradition of art and civilisation, a tradition which has never been interrupted and has never lost its vitality. Her gifts to the world are many—porcelain and silk, lacquer, paper, and tea, poetry and much other enlightenment besides. This many-sidedness is admirably set out in words and pictures in the fourth volume of the series of regional histories of the visual arts. CHINA (Methuen. 42s.) is the work of Werner Speiser, who writes with glowing enthusiasm for his subject and unshakeable belief in the continuity of China's contribution. "In China the spirit has been alive for three thousand years," he says. "It has never gone under. If we listen to those who, basing their arguments on mathematical periods, would prove that degeneration is due now, we blur our view of the future and spoil our joy in the art of to-morrow."

Brinsley Le Poer Trench, son of the fifth Earl of Clancarty and from 1956 to 1959 Editor of *The Flying Saucer Review*, has something startling to propound about the people who dwell on other planets. It is not for the humble reviewer in the space of a few lines to accept, dismiss, praise or mock such theories, but to commend the author's originality of thought, his courage, and his lively method of presenting to other people things that he himself feels about deeply. THE SKY PEOPLE (Neville Spearman. 21s.) expresses quite clearly the author's view that the space ships used by dwellers in other parts of the universe are a product of silicon, and that the electric power flowing in their hulls is activated by sunlight concentrated by a quartz lens . . . etc.

Finally, here are four illustrated books, each in full colour, and each in its particular way commending itself at this Christmas season. THE WORLD IN PICTURES (Odhams. 30s.) is a global survey with over 260 illustrations in monochrome and colour. This is something more than

by the great "F. E.'s" son, the second Lord Birkenhead, which was written soon after F. E.'s death and re-published last year. Mr. Camp quotes from many of Lord Birkenhead's more inflammatory speeches, as when he accused the Home Secretary in 1912 of "diving into a dustbin of medieval malice," and he tells many of his anecdotes well, but the overall effect is not of great weight or significance.

In the only novel this week, ARTISTS' QUARTER (Hammond. 18s.), an exceptionally readable but not entirely recommendable one by the American author, Mr. Stephen Longstreet, there is a spirited attempt at a full-length portrait of a Spanish painter who grew to fame and riches in France, changed the manner of painting in Paris and now, in his eightieth year, lives in riches though not in complacency in the South of that wonderful country. This Julio Navarro has also been the friend of such painters as Derain and Matisse, such poets as Guillaume Apollinaire and such patrons as the Steins; all of them acutely described, accurately named and admiringly quoted with the exception of Gertrude Stein, whose memory Mr. Longstreet has evidently *prise en grippe*. It is nevertheless a fact that the most illuminating account of Pablo Picasso (who else?) as a young artist appeared in the autobiography of *Alice B. Toklas*. And that was written by Gertrude Stein.

THE COMPLEAT IMBIBER (Putnam. 25s.) in its third manifestation has once more been edited with authority and charm by Mr. Cyril Ray (may his palate never want for a perfect wine!) and contains short stories, verses and essays by a list of very special authors, all of them as distinguished as they are well-informed. For proof of this, read J. B. Priestley's *Thoughts on Imbibing*, Edward Crankshaw's *Drinking in Russia* or Sarah Gainham's *Tale from the Vienna Woods*, to mention only three highlights. And, above all, enjoy yourself in the reading.

PILLS, POTIONS AND GRANNY (Hammond. 12s. 6d.) is Mr. Richard Armour's sprightly piece, ostensibly about an American drug store as it was about fifty years ago, and chiefly an impression of a closely-knit, not uneventful family life. Very readable and mildly funny.

Only one thriller, too, in THE CASE OF THE GLAMOROUS GHOST (Heinemann. 13s. 6d.), by Mr. Erle Stanley Gardener—notable for its unusual excitement in that Mr. E. S. G.'s hero, Perry Mason, comes very close indeed to scoring a duck.

Vernon Fane

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a sky traveller's broad impression with the world at his feet. It switches from the grandeur of Manhattan to a quiet country scene in the Black Forest, from Moscow's mighty university in the Lenin Hills to washing day by a village pool in Guatemala.

THE GOLDEN ENCYCLOPEDIA OF GEOGRAPHY (Macdonald. 63s.) has 450 maps, drawings and photographs in colour. It is a huge treasury of geographic lore presented in a most attractive way. In an earlier age it might have been called "Geography Without Tears," though perhaps this is not the school subject we are most inclined to cry about.

THE AIR B.P. BOOK OF FLIGHT TO-DAY (Stanley Paul. 21s.), edited by John W. R. Taylor, is a first-rate pictorial and prose survey. Many readers, content with a modest 500 m.p.h., will be particularly interested in the arguments advanced in the section, "Who Wants Supersonic Airliners?"

THE FOUR SEASONS OF SPORT (Ariel Press. 35s.) is a magnificent portfolio of Alken, Pollard, and other sporting prints. Lohse, of Frankfurt-on-Main, have made the plates and done the printing.

R. C. E.

In a scene from *The Tinker* are Harry Brown (Edward Judd) and his girl friend, Josie (Annette Crosbie)

THE TINKER
at the Comedy Theatre

A cheerful portrait of life in a red-brick university, *The Tinker* was first performed at the Bristol Old Vic some weeks ago. Following its praise by the critics, the play was transferred *en bloc* with its cast to London. It was written by Laurence Dobie and Robert Sloman, and makes full use of the advantages of staging and music to create the atmosphere of student days at such a university. Within this setting, at times full of zest and at times naive, is told the story of a typical hero of to-day, the working-class undergraduate at odds with conformity. The plot revolves round a central incident in which the undergraduate, Harry Brown, persuades a friend to accompany him on an icy climb up the college tower, as a result of which the friend is killed. Harry considers his own guilt in the matter and decides to abandon his university career. In the part, Edward Judd gives a witty and observant performance commended by the critics. He is ably supported by the young cast, including Mark Heath, Peter Birrel and Robert Fyfe, who clown and sing ballads which bridge the gaps between one scene and the next.

Below:
In the pub, seated from left, are Yvonne (Stephanie Cole); Muscles (Terence Davies); Harry Brown; Josie; Dai (Robert Fyfe); Sarah (Sally Layng); and John (Richard Gale). Standing behind are (left) Arthur (Peter Birrel) and Reggie (Mark Heath)

LEADERS OF BRITISH INDUSTRY

Photographed by Tom Hustler

Lord Rank

On Thursday, December 22, Lord Rank of Sutton Scotney was seventy-two. His name has achieved worldwide recognition through his interests in the film industry and in flour milling. He is chairman of Ranks Limited, and chairman and managing director of the Joseph Rank Group; the milling side of the family business was established by his father in 1875. To-day it employs over 40,000 people. As founder and chairman of the Rank Organisation, Lord Rank presides over a group with wide interests in cinemas, film production and a large number of other specialised technical activities. He is also chairman of Horace Marshall and Sons Ltd., with many newspaper interests. Joseph Arthur Rank is a Yorkshireman, born in Hull, and was educated at the Leys School, Cambridge. He was created a Baron in 1957. In recent years, he has devoted much time and energy to the Animal Health Trust, of which he is chairman. This is a private and voluntary organisation which has established a high national reputation for its services to farmers and for its work in improving animal health and standards. Lord Rank's adherence to the Methodist Church and the Sunday School Movement has been a characteristic of his whole life. From the early days of its foundation, he has also been an enthusiastic supporter of the World Council for Christian Education. He was responsible for the use of high-standard films in churches and Sunday schools through Religious Films Limited, and was largely instrumental in the establishment of the Churches Television Training Centre. Lord Rank's hobbies are largely concerned with country pursuits and include shooting, golf, and the breeding and training of retrievers, pointers and greyhounds. He is married, with two daughters, and lives in Hampshire

ECONOMICS OF MODERN STEEL STRIP

By "THE SPHERE" INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

An integrated steel strip mill has to-day no longer quite the glamour that used to attach to it during the first decade after the war. Then it was undoubtedly the most fashionable item of capital equipment available (beating the oil refinery by a short head), and no country anxious to rank as an industrialised or industrialising economy could afford not to invest in one. But building such a plant remains a most formidable economic commitment; and most of those built in Britain, as it happens, have moreover managed to acquire some tinge of political controversy.

This is as true of the two now being built, in Wales and Scotland, as it was of the first one ever built in Britain in the mid-'30's. That one was originally planned to be built on the iron ore fields of the Midlands, as the big tube works at Corby, in Lincolnshire, had been; but considerable Government pressure was exerted to make Richard Thomas and Co. (now Richard Thomas and Baldwins) build it on the site of an older plant at Ebbw Vale, in Glamorganshire; the company, incidentally, later ran into difficulties in finding the money to complete the plant, and had to accept a reconstruction of its capital and its directorate. Britain's second strip mill, built at Shotton, near Chester, at the end of the '30's, caused no political controversy; financing its building, however, did require the assistance of the Bank of England.

The vast integrated strip mill built at Margam and Port Talbot after the war by the Steel Company of Wales, formed specially for the purpose, required considerable assistance from the Government in releasing dollars for certain of the rolling mill equipment from the United States, and finance from the Finance Corporation for Industry, a City institution set up after the war to help large-scale industrial investment. The location of this Abbey Works was once again controversial, on economic rather than political grounds; its blast-furnaces use iron ore imported from abroad, but the port facilities there cannot take large ships. For its latest programme of expansion of the plant's capacity, the Steel Company is indeed committed to deepen the harbour channel sufficiently to handle the big ore carriers of 20,000-30,000 tons that can bring shipping costs down.

Between the decision to build the Abbey Works and the decision to make Britain's "fourth strip mill" into two, numbers four and five at Newport and at Ravenscraig on the edge of Glasgow, lie some years of nationalisation, de-nationalisation, and political arguments from both sides about the steel industry. Those arguments made it impossible to de-nationalise the last of the great State-owned steel companies, Richard Thomas and Baldwins; they made it equally unreasonable to expect Colvilles, the great Scottish steel combine, to raise money from the private capital market for its share of strip mill expansion, the semi-continuous strip mill at Ravenscraig. It was therefore agreed that up to £50,000,000 of the £70,000,000 that Colvilles was expected to invest should be lent to the company by the Treasury at somewhat favourable rates of interest; and that regardless of whether Richard Thomas should be de-nationalised during the period of building of its strip mill at Newport, the Treasury should equally lend it the £70,000,000 or more of outside capital which this development was expected to require.

The arguments about location of these two plants are over—though this autumn, again, R.T.B. encountered political controversy over its plans to get some of the ore for Newport from new opencast workings in Oxfordshire. Some questions about their economics, however, can hardly be solved until they come into full operation in the mid-'60's. And these questions, for R.T.B., affect the remaining question of returning to private ownership what will probably become the most heavily-capitalised steel enterprise in Britain.

An integrated steelworks like this, combining every operation from unloading the ore and roasting the coking coal, through iron- and steel-making to rolling the most elaborately-finished forms of steel in general use, motor body sheet and tinplate, is a massively expensive investment. Ebbw Vale and Shotton cost, in the '30's, more than the industry was used to; after the war, the initial costs of building the Abbey Works were so high, in relation to the small, inefficient but written-down plants on which sheet and tinplate were being made that it took some years and a minor recession in flat steel sales for this hugely more efficient competitor to drive these somewhat archaic plants out of business. Ravenscraig, where some of the iron and steel plant was in existence before it was decided to put down the strip mill, will probably cost £60,000,000 for about 500,000 tons of finished steel a year (when one counts in the ancillary plant nearby). Newport is on what the industry calls a "green field site." From the ground up, it will probably cost £150,000,000 by the time it reaches its current planned capacity of 2,000,000 tons a year.

One effect of this huge prospective investment, on which profits can hardly begin to be earned for several years hence, is to make it no easier for the Government to sell Richard Thomas and Baldwins back to private investors. Even if the Treasury has promised to lend the money, how do they know whether the market for flat steel will be good enough in, say, 1965-66 to offer decent profits on the last, and hence the most expensive, strip mill to come into operation? As a result, the managements of both these new plants have the greatest possible incentive to build in extra efficiency—which in 1960, as against say 1946, is much less easy to command.

Technically, there was no comparison between the Abbey Works that the Steel Company of Wales designed just after the war and the fringe of obsolete steel and tinplate works that represented the weakest of its competition. Ebbw Vale and Shotton were efficient plants built cheaply before the war, offering strip mill quality sheet with relatively low capital charges; but the sheet and tinplate the old plants produced, though cheap, was of much lower quality. The Abbey Works was expected to pay because demand was expanding rather than because it could put those small plants out of business; but eventually it did, because customers would no longer be satisfied with sheet of lower quality than they could buy from a modern mill.

The key point of competition for Ravenscraig and Newport is that when they come into the business there will be nothing but strip mill sheet and tinplate on sale; and it will be coming from highly efficient plants built somewhat more cheaply. There has been no technical revolution in rolling flat steel in the last decade to cut operating costs further. The price of capital equipment is no longer rising; Ravenscraig and Newport might enjoy slightly lower prices for certain plant than during the peak years of 1955-58. But there is no doubt that they will face tougher competition in periods of slack demand than the Abbey Works has ever had to. And this autumn's recession in the motor industry, after a spring of its liveliest boom ever, has reminded steel-makers and the City that demand for flat steel can go down as well as up.

These factors affecting what are at present perhaps the two most important single items of capital investment not only in British steel but in the whole of British industry, have given Colvilles and Richard Thomas and Baldwins the strongest incentive to seek after "capital-saving" elements in designing their plants—that is, techniques that give the best possible performance out of the money spent. This does not necessarily mean spending less money initially—though the "L-D" system of making steel in oxygen-blown convertors that both plants have adopted will be significantly less costly to put in than open-hearth furnaces of the kind for which the Abbey Works was originally designed. It may, as logically, mean spending a little more money here and there, on instrumentation and control equipment that will enable them to get the utmost possible rate of output—and profit—out of the capital embodied in their steel processing equipment.

Steel is an industry that lends itself to a high degree of mechanical handling, instrumentation and control—mainly because there is no other way to handle anything as heavy, hot, and fast-moving as steel in as many points on its way through the works. Every open-hearth furnace in a modern melting shop, for example, has its "pulpit," an elaborate console mounted with dials showing what is going on in the huge furnaces opposite. No first-hand melter, however, would feel fully dressed without his piece of blue glass to peer at the furnace through the open door; and many of them still put more reliance on their own judgment over various elements in the process than in whatever may be recorded on any bank of dials.

That, in a sense, represents a transitional attitude to automation. Whether he is justified or not (and most melting shop managers would still perhaps rely on their first hand melter's judgment if the dials give odd readings) the expert operator is using instrumentation to assist his judgment rather than replace it. With much more rapid processes for making steel such as the "L-D" convertor, one may have hardly the time for much weighty judgment; certainly they will be used in making a much more standardised quality of steel, but there may nevertheless be the opportunities and even the necessity for more automatic operation than is usual with the slower and more flexible open-hearth process. Taking large tonnages of steel away about every half-hour, also, will require a more elaborately-controlled handling system than the locomotives and "ladle" trucks most steelworks use at present.

Automatic control in a modern works, again, need not end at the instruments and controls built into the furnaces, mills and motoring. Several works have already begun to use computers to work out in advance the most advantageous programme of operations to cover a varied range of orders over a given period, and the implications of this flow of current demand for finished steel all the way back to their own plans for ore shipment and railway movement of coking coal. The amount of money that has to be tied up in a steel mill is so large, and the time to bring it into operation so long, that when the industry planned Newport and Ravenscraig in 1957-58 they were looking at the mid-'60's; to-day they are thinking about 1970. Designs for these two plants already embody, therefore, some of the thinking that may become dominant in the investment policies of many other industries during this decade; an added accent not purely on investment for expansion's sake alone, but on getting value for money out of one's investment.

UNITED STATES

The waters of the lakes and riverways dividing Canada and the U.S. are being harnessed in several vast schemes providing hydro-electric power. One of these is the Niagara Power Project, harnessing the water which drops 165 ft. over the famous Falls. Under construction for the New York State Power Authority, the scheme takes water from above the Falls, through four miles of twin conduits, each measuring 46 ft. by 66 ft., to the power plant situated three miles below Niagara. This comprises the Niagara Generating Plant, with thirteen turbine generators and an installed capacity of getting on for 2,000,000 kW., and the Tuscarora Pump Generating Plant, with twelve pump-turbines and motor-generators and an installed capacity of 240,000 kW. So as to generate as much power as possible and to take into account fluctuations of demand, the project was designed with a storage reservoir. Some of the water travelling through the covered conduits will generate electricity at Tuscarora to be used at night to power the pumps which will lift water 80 ft. up to the reservoir. When the demand for power is at its peak, the storage water will flow down through the turbines. The Niagara Scheme is due to be in operation early next year.

The second United States scheme is on the St. Lawrence. A gradual fall of 90 ft. from Lake Ontario to Cornwall has been controlled by the construction of three dams, many miles of dikes and channels, and the creation of the 60-sq.-mile Lake St. Lawrence. Now in use, the Robert H. Saunders and Robert Moses Power Dam is 3,300 ft. long with thirty-two turbine generators, rated at 1,880,000 kW. It is bisected by the boundary between Canada and the U.S. and its construction and output have been shared between the two countries.

Foreground is the outlet area of the conduits of the Niagara Power Project, with, centre background, the Tuscarora Generating Plant

CONSTRUCTION

The Bailey bridge carrying Lewiston Road crosses the floor of a canal in front of the intake structure of the Niagara Generating Plant

WALES

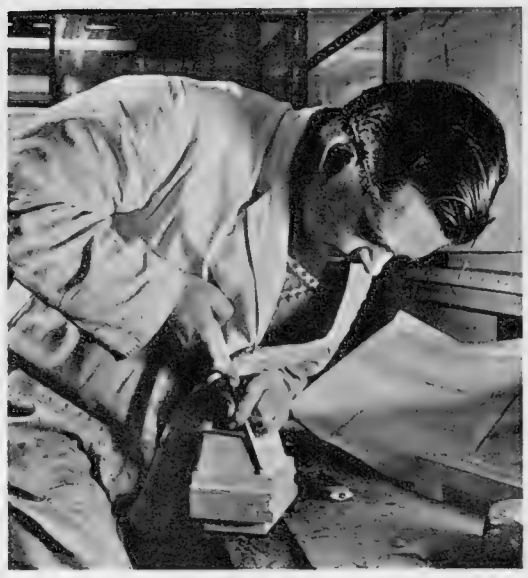
Being built for the Central Electricity Generating Board's Northern Project Group, Trawsfynydd is the fourth nuclear power station to be built under the C.E.G.B.'s programme, and the first in Wales. It will have an output capacity of 500,000 kW. and two natural-uranium-fuelled reactors. The first of these is due to come into operation in 1963, with full operation in 1964. Work started in July 1959. Sited 650 ft. above sea-level, Trawsfynydd stands under the shadow of Craig Gyfynys, on the northern shore of an artificial lake. This has the capacity to supply the 35,000,000 gallons of cooling water per hour necessary to the station's operation. The power from the new station will be mixed to form integrated electricity systems with the Pumped Storage Hydro-Electric Scheme under construction at Blaenau Ffestiniog — 275,000 volts from each — and the Maentwrog Hydro-electric station — 33,000 volts from each. Contractors for designing, constructing, and commissioning Trawsfynydd are Atomic Power Constructions Ltd.

Number One reactor at the North Wales Trawsfynydd Nuclear Power Station is dwarfed by a Monotower crane

Under construction for the power station are the cooling water intake pipes bringing water from the artificial lake to the station. They have a diameter of 9 ft. 10 ins.

AUSTRALIA

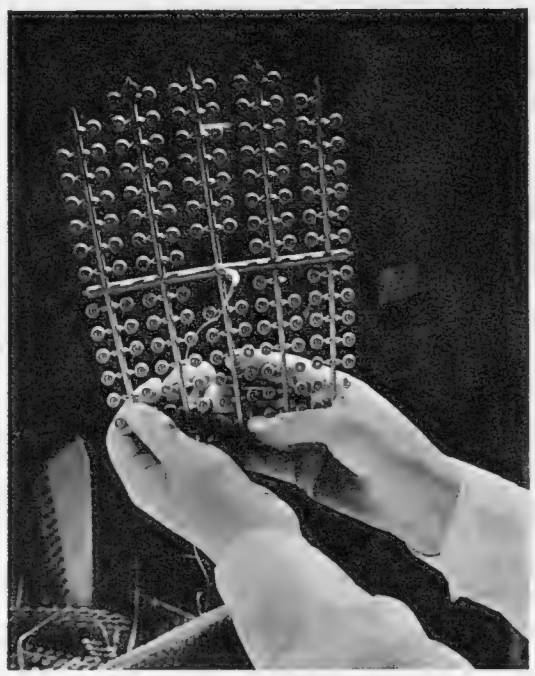
Left: Twenty-five-feet-high gantries are made ready on Sydney's new overseas shipping terminal at Circular Quay. Background is the famous Sydney Harbour Bridge. There are six of the gantries, which travel the length of the quay. The terminal was due to be opened at the end of this month in time to receive as its first ship the P & O/Orient Lines *Oriana*, on her maiden voyage to Australia. The new structure cost approximately £1,400,000



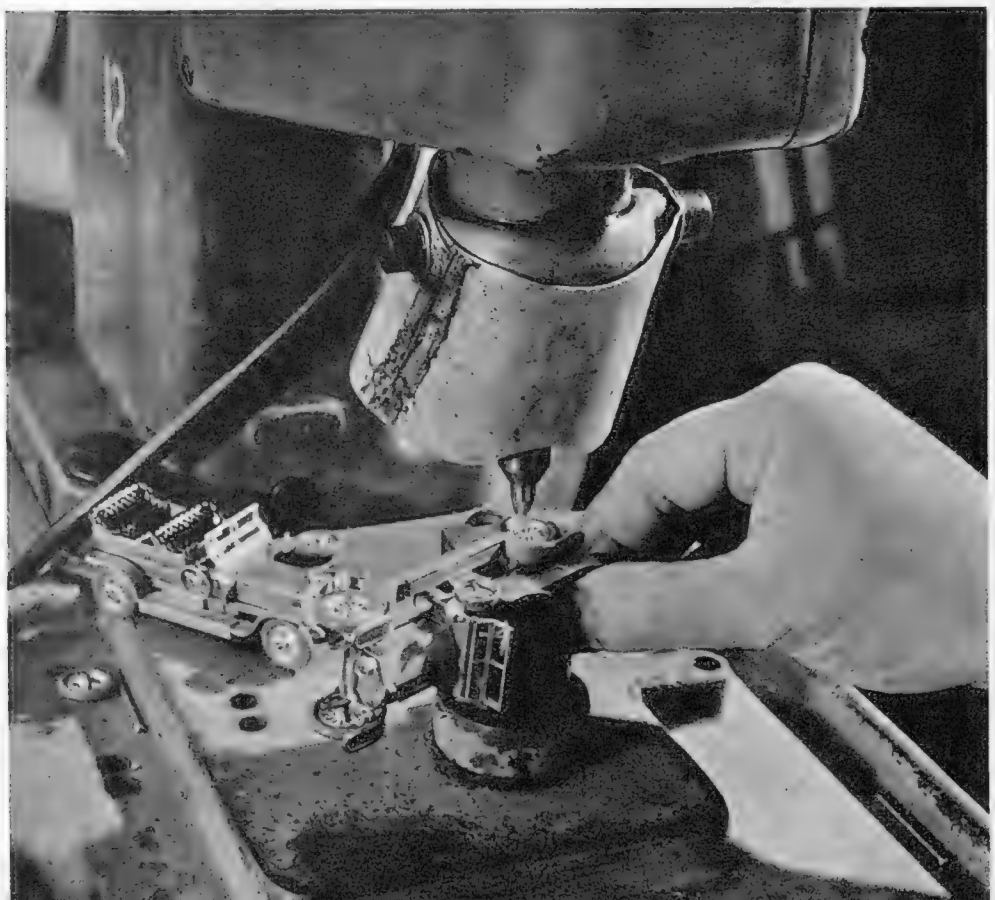
From left: A design draughtsman works on plans for a new model; a craftsman pattern-maker chisels a wooden model for the new toy; a resin mould is prepared

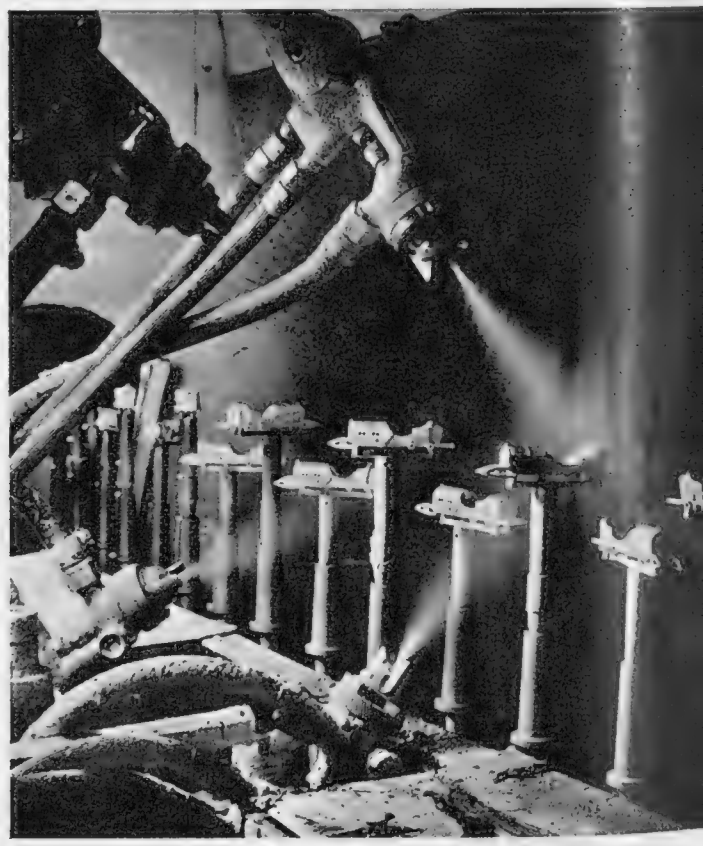
MODELS IN THE MAKING

In 1947 two ex-Servicemen, John Odell and Leslie Smith, formed Lesney Products with their war gratuities, and started business in almost derelict premises in Tottenham, London. They began by producing pressure diecastings for industry, and then, almost as a sideline, broke into the field of toy models. In 1953—the year Queen Elizabeth was crowned—they brought out a Coronation Coach model. It was only the fourth model they had produced, but it sold over 1,000,000 in the year. To-day Lesney's have 126 different models in their various series. Their works are now at Hackney, where building extensions will increase the total factory area to 110,000 sq. ft. Some 1,300 people are employed there, 74 of them being skilled toolmakers who make the dies for the toys. The production process is similar for all models. After a new design has been chosen, a wooden model is made. This is converted into a resin mould which is in turn scaled down by a pantograph for the actual die cutting. The model is cast, spray-painted and the final " trimmings "—wheels, windows, and so on—are added. Although Lesney's have had, and are having, amazing success with their toys—both at home and in an export market which covers almost every country in the world—the industrial diecasting is not neglected. In fact, up to 250,000 commercial diecastings are made a week. However, the production figures for the toy-making side of the business are the most striking. Some idea of these can be gathered from the fact that a year's quota of " Matchbox " Models, placed nose to tail, would more than cover the 1,300 miles from London to Rome. The " Matchbox " series are priced at 1s. 6d., and there are now other series of larger models. All of them cost less than 5s. and the majority less than 4s.



Miniature wheels—some of the millions made every week and (right) a die is cut in chrome vanadium steel





Model bodies move past the paint spray nozzles. These machines were specially designed and installed by Lesney engineers

Left: One of the many semi-automatic machines used for forming the axle-ends, in the factory of Lesney Products and Co. Ltd.

INDUSTRY AND THE STOCK MARKET

COUNTER ATTACK

By "THE SPHERE" CITY CORRESPONDENT

Paradoxically, the troubles of the motor-car, furniture and durable household equipment manufacturers are bringing good cheer to the department stores. The official retail trade figures confirm what we see every time we force our way through the thronging Christmas shoppers; despite a slight slackening last month, business over the counters is still astonishingly buoyant. The truth appears to be that hire-purchase restrictions have helped the stores by shifting spending from such things as cars, motor-cycles, television sets, etc., to clothing, shoes, jewellery, leather goods, cosmetics, fancy goods and other items that account for the bulk of store sales.

Mr. Isaac Wolfson, chairman of Great Universal Stores, recently reported to his shareholders that sales in the six months to the end of last September were higher than a year earlier although profit margins had narrowed. The group is in rather a special situation for it has a wide variety of selling methods, ranging from mail order business and mobile shops calling on remote areas, to big City stores. Among its best-known shops are Jays, Burberrys', Hector Powe, Jones and Higgins, and Hope Bros. It has just sold Waring and Gillow to the Leeds firm of John Peters.

Five years ago, one-fifth of all GUS's home trading was on hire-purchase terms which made the company vulnerable to changes in official credit policies. Now this proportion has been reduced to one-tenth. Overseas hire-purchase sales are much higher but this causes Mr. Wolfson little concern; overseas Governments seem to place less reliance on hire-purchase curbs and spurs to control their economies. The GUS group has come to the end, temporarily at least, of the big expansionary phase it went through in the middle 1950's when scarcely a month passed without the newspaper headlines proclaiming another Wolfson take-over bid. Mr. Wolfson has explained his quiescence in these words: "Few opportunities occur to-day for such expansion, mainly because the prices asked are often unrelated to future earning capacity." Potential sellers, in fact, dazzled by prices obtained by their friends, now tend to ask the earth.

Mr. Hugh Fraser, head of the House of Fraser stores group, seems to take a different view. It was just over a year ago that he swallowed the Harrods group, paying a price that many in the City considered (wrongly) to be much too high. Recently he bought up the Edinburgh catering firm of J. W. Mackie. He is obviously now much occupied with digestive processes but there are no signs that he has abandoned take-overs as a means of expanding.

Possibly the most successful stores group in the country is Marks and Spencer. It never absorbs other businesses; all its expansion has been by building new stores and enlarging and rebuilding existing ones. In the last nine years £37,000,000 has been spent on this policy, every penny of which was drawn from ploughed-back earnings. However, to speed up the expansion process, arrangements have now been made to borrow £5,000,000 from the Prudential. There is a saying in the City that however high Marks and Spencer shares rise, they will always rise higher. They have moved up 30s. this year to above the £5 level, although recently they have fallen back some 10s. Over the past ten years net profits have grown from £2,000,000 to £9,000,000 and dividends have increased more than six-fold. The marketing policy is highly enlightened with a growing range of goods and frequently reduced prices.

The competitor at whom the Marks and Spencer chiefs most often look over their shoulders is undoubtedly F. W. Woolworth which has more than four times as many stores and a policy of broadening its range so that it overlaps Marks and Spencer's at many points. The days of nothing over 6d. have been forgotten. Woolworth's is, of course, controlled by an American parent. Its rate of growth, although rapid, has been less spectacular than Marks and Spencer's with net profits rising from £5,500,000 to £14,000,000 since 1950. Woolworth's, too, has expanded without recourse to take-overs, spending £35,000,000 of its own in the last five years, on modernising and expanding its stores.

The biggest drapery chain in the country is Debenhams with more than 100 stores stretching from Bournemouth to Birmingham and beyond. It has a store in Brussels and two in Australia. Mr. John Bedford, the chairman, has an unusual policy of grading stores into High-Class, Medium-Class and Popular. Among the former are Debenham and Freebody, Marshall and Snelgrove and Woolland's, while the "populars" include Kennards of Croydon and Redhill, and Cresta Silks. It has always been a conservative group and its most tempestuous experience was when it wrestled vainly with House of Fraser last year for control of Harrods.

Selfridges, the huge store at the Marble Arch end of Oxford Street, is owned by Lewis's Investment Trust, the Liverpool group of which Lord Woolton is president. The 4½ acres it owns are among the most valuable in London. Gamage's of Holborn has the distinction of being the only big department store on the eastern side of Central London. It is a valuable address for the area is being rapidly re-developed and Mr. A. W. Gamage, the chairman, believes this will bring a whole army of new customers to the store. The Army and Navy Stores, slightly off the beaten shopping track in Victoria Street, also expects to gain from the big developments of office buildings in the area.

GOOD LIVING

by Ganymede

After a decade of spurious peace and plenty it appears that the extended popularity of typical English Christmas fare is now beginning to recede. Roast turkey, mince-pies and plum pudding will always retain their favour in the menu for Christmas, but it is not reasonable that one should eat them for many weeks on special occasions when there are all the other attractive and interesting delights of the table freely available.

This was brought home to me at a "Christmas" lunch at the Dorchester given about a fortnight before Christmas by a well-known businessman for more than 500 of his friends. The main dish was *La pièce de Boeuf à la Mode* preceded by a chicken consommé and *Le Filet de Sole Bormese*, and followed by a pineapple confection incorporating a lemon sorbet. None of this was in the least "christmassy," but made a fine, well-balanced festive meal nevertheless. It was accompanied by a carefully-chosen succession of wines: a delightful Alsatian, *Traminer "Hugel" Grand Cru* 1957 with the fish, *Clos de Vougeot* 1953 with the meat, and a champagne, *Pol Roger, Extra Cuvée* 1947, with the dessert.

The fish course was an original creation of M. Eugène Kaufeler, for many years *Chef des Cuisines* of the Dorchester, and the adjective "Bormese"—after the charming resort just off the French Riviera—suggests the Provençal character of the dish. The fillets of sole were dipped in melted butter and breadcrumbed, but instead of being fried, they were cooked under the grill, and then laid on the garnish consisting of courgettes, aubergines, mushrooms and tomatoes finely chopped, and covered with a gentle wine sauce. The *Boeuf à la Mode* consisted of whole pieces of rump steak, larded and marinaded and then braised in the marinade with carrots, onions and various herbs. With the addition of calves feet to improve the consistency of the sauce, reduced, it was poured over the meat, sliced for service.

I discussed the question of Christmas cooking with M. Kaufeler in his vast, gleaming kitchens afterwards over another cup of coffee and a glass of Kirsch from his native Switzerland. He agrees that the typical Christmas fare soon becomes boring if presented too often. Unfortunately, he said, there is very little that can be done in the way of introducing new ideas, or being original, when it comes to food based on such deep-rooted tradition. He did, however, describe to me an entirely novel way of stuffing the turkey (or any other, smaller bird for that matter) which has the distinct advantage of easier serving, hot or cold.

The essence of the idea is removal of the breast bone from inside, leaving the carcase in one piece; this is not as difficult as it sounds if the operation is started from the forward end by first taking out the wishbone. The ingredients for filling completely the cavity of a 12-lb. bird are these: 1 lb. pork, not too lean; 6 ozs. ham, diced; 20 large chestnuts; ½ lb. crustless white bread; 6 eggs; ¼ pint cream; a little milk, a little sherry, salt, pepper, etc. Mince the pork finely. Soak the bread in a little milk, mash and add to the pork (1½ lb. sausage meat could be substituted). Break in the eggs, add the cream and work well together. Add ham and previously cooked chestnuts, seasoning and sherry.

The great expectations of the 1959 vintage as far as hocks and moselles are concerned are entirely fulfilled if one can judge by the wines met so far. There are more hocks than moselles offered up to now. All those that I have tried are excellent; they are invariably richer and fuller than in other years, with less acidity than normal, and there is not a really very dry one among them. It must be understood that by no means all the 1959 German wines are ready for drinking. Generally speaking it is only the lighter wines that should be drunk so soon. The wines made of special, late-selection grapes—Auslese, Trockenbeerenauslese, etc.—will not be at their best for some time yet.

When I visited the Rhine and Moselle districts in the autumn and called at the German headquarters of some of the most important shippers at Worms, Mainz and Koblenz, each one of my informants expressed similar feelings: a certain amount of reluctance to put 1959's on the market too early, and each one suggested that they were forced to do this by competition. Having now tried several of that vintage shipped over here, I feel that, as far as the more ordinary wines are concerned, they need not have worried.

The head of the firm in Mainz offered me and a few other visitors who called on the same day a tasting in miniature, the perfect example of making a wine tasting easy and enjoyable. This was the list of the wines tasted: 1959 Bernkasteler Berg Blue Nun Label; 1959 Dorf Johannisberger; 1959 Liebfraumilch Blue Nun Label; 1959 Ruppertsberger Nussbein Riesling; 1959 Oppenheimer Kroetenbrunnen Auslese; 1953 Rauenthaler Steinmaecher Riesling Auslese; 1945 Niersteiner Auflangen Riesling Beerenauslese; 1953 Niersteiner Kranzberg Fuchsloch Roher Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese.

It was most instructive. Of the 59's the first two, the lightest, were most enjoyable, the Liebfraumilch, a blend of Sylvaner and Riesling from Nierstein, excellent, but the Ruppertsberger was by no means ready. It was, as our host put it, "nervous," and almost bottle-sick, and we unanimously concluded that the Kroetenbrunnen Auslese will be a beautiful wine in three to four years' time. As one would expect, the two 1953's were in perfect condition, having reached full maturity, while it was also quite clear that the 1945 had gone over the top, and gave no indication of its past glory.

MOTORING

RAILWAYS INTO ROADS

"Cars of the Connoisseur"; increasing emphasis on safety harnesses; and other information

By **COURTENAY EDWARDS**

Since the war more than 1,000 miles of railway track in Britain have fallen into disuse. That is route miles. The actual track mileage closed totals more than 2,000. These stretches of railroad lie neglected and overgrown by weeds in most cases—relics of a bygone age. Many people concerned with transport are beginning to ask if there has yet been a full investigation of the possibility of turning these disused rail tracks into roads.

This idea has been spotlighted in the announcement by Mr. Ernest Marples, Minister of Transport, that six miles of the old Merthyr-Abergavenny railway in South Wales are being used to form part of the new line of the picturesquely-named Heads of the Valleys Road. This road—A.465—extends from Hirwaun to Abergavenny. The route originally chosen under the modernisation scheme was decided on before the railway line was abandoned. It has now been revised and the section between Dowlais Top and Beaufort will run along the former railway to give gentler gradients and curves and reduced interference with private property.

A disused railway station which has been put to good use is St. Fillans, near Loch Earn, in Perthshire. It is now an all-the-year-round caravan site

The Norfolk County Council has somewhat similar plans to convert into roads six sections—totalling 22 miles—of the old single-track Midland and Great Northern line between Caister-on-Sea, just north of Great Yarmouth, and Aylsham. The Council was given estimates that the cost of converting these six stretches of railway would be £871,400 compared with £1,132,000 for improving the existing narrow, winding roads they would replace—or, more accurately, supplement. They were all set to go ahead with the scheme three months ago—until the British Transport Commission told them they wanted £200,000 for the land in question.

That is about seven times as much as the Council expected to have to pay and Alderman Frank Easton, chairman of the Council's Highways Committee, has described the suggested price as fantastic. I telephoned the Norfolk County Council this week to find out what is happening to this project and was told: "We are still negotiating with the B.T.C. about the price. We haven't made much progress but we have by no means abandoned the idea."

The big railways-into-roads champion in Britain is Brigadier T. I. Lloyd, former deputy engineer-in-chief at the War Office. He wants to go the whole hog and do away with the railway system altogether. For years now he has been putting forward carefully-reasoned arguments for converting the whole of the British rail network—20,000 miles of it—into roads over which passenger coaches and lorries would operate at a minimum speed of 60 m.p.h. and under close control. In my opinion this idea does not bear close scrutiny. By all means let us turn into roads, when suitable, railways which have had to be abandoned because of their unprofitability. But what the country surely needs is a practical programme for integrating the rail network more effectively with the country's overall transport resources. It should carry more of the heavy loads which today clutter up the roads.

By no means the least attractive feature of *Cars of the Connoisseur* (Batsford. 30s.) is the jacket designed by John Dunscombe. The coloured, impressionistic pictures on the front cover of vintage Rolls-Royce and Bugatti models must surely exert an irresistible enticement, to all but the most blasé of motoring enthusiasts, to dip deeply into this fascinating book by John Buckley. In it he tells the story of all the most famous of the thoroughbred cars which have graced the history of automobile development. Most of it has been said before, but no one has ever sketched with such relish and knowledge the background to such celebrated marques as Rolls-Royce, Hispano-Suiza, Mercedes-Benz, Isotta-Fraschini and Duesenberg—to name only a few.

Buckley has interesting stories to tell about many of the great and sometimes rather eccentric personalities behind these fabulous marques. Describing how the German-built Daimler cars got the name Mercedes at the turn of the century—they were named after the eleven-year-old daughter of the Austro-Hungarian Consul-General at Nice—the author records the strange fact that "in this rather odd way an eminent German car was given a Spanish name by an Austrian living in France." Many younger readers of this fascinating, liberally-illustrated book will probably learn for the first time that the Hispano-Suiza got its name because its creator, Marc Birkigt, was a Swiss who started building cars in Barcelona with Spanish capital. Buckley makes it clear that that man of genius, Henry Royce, must have been a difficult man to work with. In the very early days of the marque, when the Silver Ghost was born, he "had to be pressed to sleep" and "on many occasions an apprentice used to follow him around the workshop with a meal, cooked on the premises, trying to persuade him to eat."

The fact that Donald Campbell was saved from almost certain death, when Bluebird crashed at 365 m.p.h., by the G.Q. safety harness he was wearing has done more to popularise the use of belts and straps than any single publicity idea yet devised. "I want to see all new cars fitted with built-in seat belts," he declared on his return from the U.S. The *Sunday Dispatch* is carrying out a valuable campaign in favour of harness and the Queen, the Duke of Edinburgh, the Duke of Richmond and Mr. Ernest Marples are setting a good example by using harnesses. Also, I note with interest that four well-known makers of belts and harness—Masco, Britax, Autosafe and Irvin—have banded together into a kind of manufacturers' council to promote the use of harness by co-operative publicity.

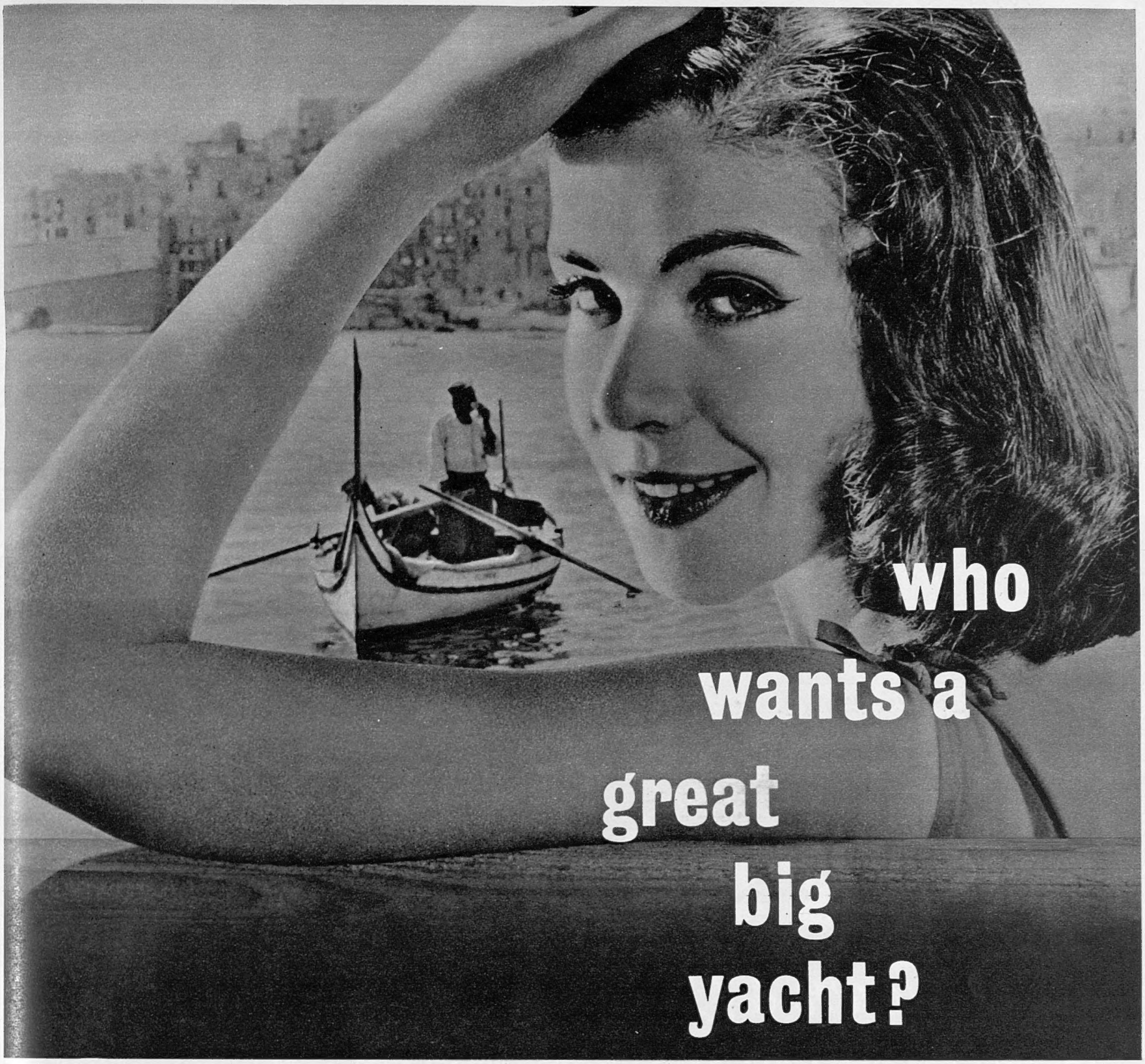
Since the British Standards Institution published an official strength standard last July—designed to protect a 14-stone man in a 60-m.p.h. car stopping in 6 ft.—no one should think of buying a belt or shoulder straps which do not bear the Institution's famous kite mark. The Consumer Advisory Council, which is connected with the Institution, recently issued a remarkably frank report on tests carried out with well-known makes of safety harness. The makes which came out of it best are Richmond, Irvin, Britax and Autosafe. Full harness costs between £4 15s. and £18, according to make, and the price of hip belts varies between £3 and £6 10s. The big point to watch, though, is that the best of harnesses is valueless unless firmly anchored to the car floor with an adequate steel plate. One expert has even expressed doubts whether the floor of the average quantity-built car is strong enough to provide a really safe anchorage

Briefly. . . . Leyland Motors, the big commercial vehicle firm, whose chairman is sixty-two-year-old Sir Henry Spurrier, have made an offer of £18,000,000 for Standard-Triumph International; more than 100 British crews have been accepted for next month's 2,300-mile Monte Carlo Rally; and the Council of the Institute of Advanced Motorists has appointed Mr. Dudley Noble as executive member to direct its policy. . . .

Goodyear have published a booklet on how to make tyres last longer; Martin Walter, of Folkestone, have built 10,000 Bedford Dormobiles, Utilabrakes and other "conversions" in eleven months; and the R.A.C. have enrolled their 3,000th approved driving instructor. . . .

Stirling Moss has joined Rob Walker and Ken Gregory in running a motor racing nursery for young drivers; the British Road Federation has castigated the L.C.C.'s revised development plan; and the Cooper Car Co. has published an interesting 3s. 6d. booklet entitled *The Cooper Golden Years* to commemorate its achievement in winning the racing car constructors' world championship three times running.

This is what the Austin Healey Sprite looks like when fitted with the "Starsprite" plastic bonnet made by G. A. Glassfibrication Ltd. of Leeds. It costs £42 with free delivery and weighs 40 lb.—32 lb. less than the steel bonnet. It is said to add 5 m.p.h. to the top speed



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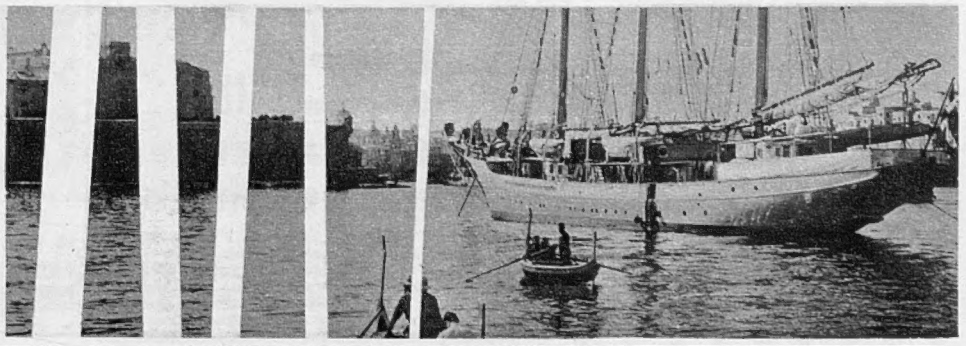

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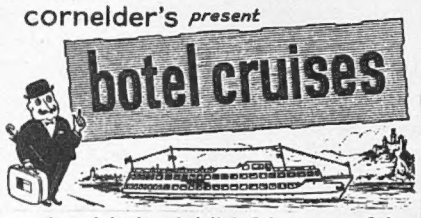

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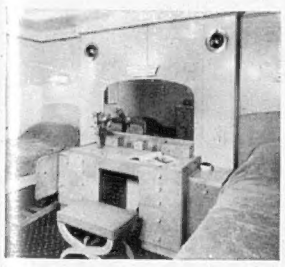

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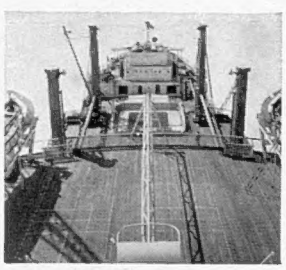

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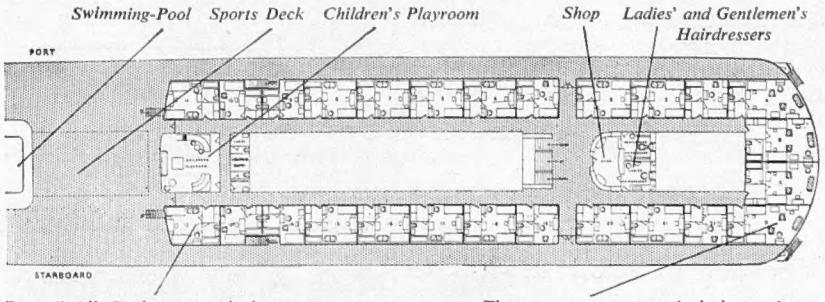

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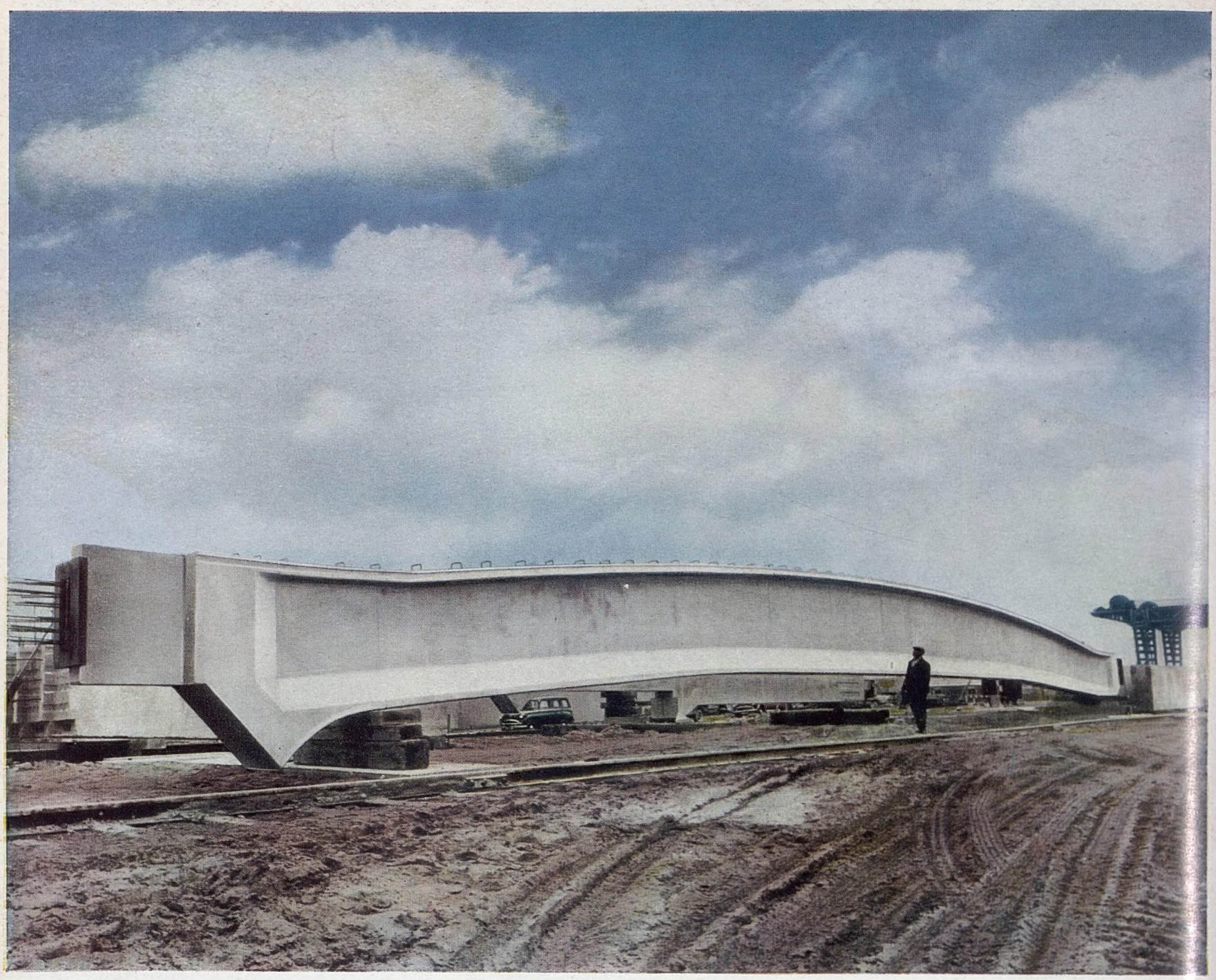

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